THAT'S WAR

W. A. SIRMON

NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE

THOMAS J. BATA LIBRARY
TRENT UNIVERSITY

That's War

The Linmon Company
Atlanta

That's War

An Authentic Diary

By
W. A. Sirmon

The Linmon Company
Atlanta

Copyright, 1929
By W. A. SIRMON
Published November, 1929

All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form.

Printed in the United States of America

W. A. Sirmon, A. E. F.
D. S. C., Legion of Honor, Croix de Guerre

To My Boys

With the prayer that the lot of war will never be theirs, but if the safety or honor of their country should demand it, that they will meet the issue with the same courage and fidelity with which my comrades met the challenge of 1917-18.

Contents

Chapter		Page
I	Transformation	17
II	The Crossing	63
III	Flowers of Peace—Birds of War	87
IV	The Frontier of Freedom	111
V	Ghosts of No Man's Land	141
VI	Darkness and Death	175
VII	The Tourist	203
VIII	America at The Post of Honor	231
IX	The Eloquence of Artillery	255
X	Peace	267

Illustrations

Frontispiece ..... Page 8

The 82nd Crosses The Atlantic..... Opposite Page 67

Royalty Meets a Prince of Men..... Opposite Page 83

In the Tread of These Men Was to be Heard the Footfall of Fate..... Opposite Page 85

Wondering What "Les Americaines" Would Do to the Boche..Opposite Page 115

They See in These Doughboys the Promise of Victory .....Opposite Page 131

Tandalore Torpedos Blowing Lanes Through Enemy Wire ..Opposite Page 147

Wounded Awaiting Ambulances ..... Opposite Page 157

The Old Roman Tower at Port Sur Seille .....Opposite Page 164

Chopping the German Wire..... Opposite Page 178

A Literal Machine Gun Nest Shot Down in the Argonne .....Opposite Page 242

Chatel Chehery From the Heights of the Argonne .....Opposite Page 259

The Weary Doughboy .....Opposite Page 275

In Retrospect

We look backward across a chasm of eleven years to the armistice that halted the cataclysm that threatened to destroy western civilization. Eleven years to ponder the frightful conflicts along the battle fronts of Europe, Asia and Africa, and the war upon the seven seas! Eleven years for five hundred million people to mourn the loss of their kinsmen killed upon the fields of battle; eleven years through which millions of men have worn the scars of battle wounds upon their bodies; eleven years in which other millions have gone about the earth with the spectre of war haunting their memories, restless, unsettled, dissatisfied!

We stand appalled! Small wonder the world cries out for Peace!

Who started the war? Nobody knows; least of all the men who fought its battles.

Who won the war? There seems to be much disagreement about that too.

In this work there is no attempt to solve such mysteries; no effort to put forward a panacea for war. It will remind you that the gigantic struggle a decade ago was carried on by human beings. It is an authentic diary, religiously kept day by day while the great war, in all its immensity and stern reality, was about the author, a young American of twenty-three years,

of the Infantry. For five years he was an officer of the Philippine Constabulary. In that service he was required to keep a personal diary subject to periodical official inspection. This training, combined with an intense desire to retain an accurate, realistic history of his service in the war of wars, accounts for this volume. In it you may follow the actual life of a typical doughboy, one tiny human element, through the eventful days of 1918.

The doughboy has been grossly imposed upon by many who have characterized him in story. Here you see him as he painted himself with no thought that any one but his intimate friends would ever see the picture. What were his loves and his hates? What were his thoughts as he splashed through the rain on the muddy drill grounds of the training camp? What inspired the spirit that made the American doughboy the most formidable fighting man known to the Western Front? What secret fears or triumphs were his as he moved in and out of battle? No one can tell you today. Those eleven years that intervene have wrought their changes. Sitting quietly in peace today no one can bring back the perspective of those tempestuous days.

The author opens his diary to you January 1st, 1918. In the first chapter only enough typical days of camp life are published to let you see the doughboy there, plodding through

the snow and mud and the tedium of routine training. Then he moves into action.

That the picture may in no way be confused by the present, not a change is made in the diary. It is unaltered. It is the one hope of the author that you will find reflected in this work the truth that the men who fought for America in 1917-18 did so cheerfully and with great pride in their service.

The Author

CHAPTER I.

Transformation

January 1st, 1918. Camp Gordon, Georgia. The day of resolutions. I have made none. If the old adage about the routine of the first day of the new year being the routine of the 364 to follow it holds true for 1918, I am stuck for guard duty for a long, long time. I stood Reveille at six o'clock as officer of the guard. Inspected the guard three times during the morning. I was relieved at one o'clock and went on duty with the company. The afternoon was dull and drizzly. Private Beck of Company "L" gathered some of the talent drafted into the Service and gave an entertainment at the Officers' Club in the evening. There were Keith circuit stars and a jazz drummer from the Knickerbocker Hotel in New York, in his cast. I was impressed by the varied talent that has been called to the colors "To Make the World Safe for Democracy."

January 3. Reveille seemed to follow retreat. I was startled out of bed at 5:15. At seven o'clock we marched about two miles out of camp and were issued picks and shovels. There were two hundred yards of trenches to be dug, and we had two days in which to dig them. We

put men to work, two shovels and a pick to every three yards, and the snow-bound earth began to open up. Marching out through the pine groves I remarked the beautiful effect the soft, white veil gave the forest of green. Everywhere were the tiny tracks of rabbits. The frigid north had wedded, for a day, our sunny Dixieland. I cannot compliment our mess officer on the lunch he gave us. Nobody was overburdened internally by any means. We pushed frozen toes into the ashes at intervals all morning. A fine spirit marked the work and the men sang songs of the day when we go to France.

January 4th. I have known many people, but none who are so prompt as the bugler who breaks my slumber at 5:15 every morning. He is never late. I peek out the window and see the stars fading from the heavens, but there is little to indicate that the sun is nearing the horizon. Is it any wonder that the American Army from coast to coast is singing with marked feeling—

Oh how I hate to get up in the morning,
Oh how I'd like to remain in bed.
But the saddest blow of all,
Is when I hear that bugle call—
"You've got to get up,
"You've got to get up,
"You've got to get up this morning."

Some day I'm going to murder the bugler,
Some day you're going to find him dead.
I'll amputate his Reveille,
And step upon it heavily,
And spend the rest of my life in bed.

Back to the trenches again in the mud and snow. Though our feet were often cold, we were warm hearted and of good spirits, and the trying weather was lost in considering the reason for it all. Our days in France are sure to come, and we know that we must dig there, where every stroke of the pick must do the most good. We must learn now how best to direct our energies, for the Boche will not hold his fire while we take lessons "over there." We were finished by eleven o'clock and were given a half-holiday. I stood retreat at four thirty.

January 5th. Reveille today brought anxiety to all company officers. News had come down from the mighty seat of the Division Commander that we would have a general inspection. It developed, however, that but one company would be selected from our Regiment, this one to be thoroughly inspected. My own apprehensions were eased by my appointment as acting Battalion Adjutant for the day. Company "D" of the First Battalion was selected, missing us entirely. I bore the good news to our Company Commanders with a remorseful face. As I approached each one of them withered

believing his company would be inspected. Noting their uneasiness, I began each report with, "Sir, the cruel hand of misfortune has fallen most heavily upon — " and when I paused they would almost faint before I could add, "Company 'D'." Then the sun blinked in the face of smiles from the Commander's face. I was offered the Battalion Adjutant's job as a permanent dish, but was permitted to remain with my platoon when I expressed my preference. Went to town with Captain Whatley. Spent the night at the Kimball House.

January 7th. The bugler, evidently angered because I escaped the fierce attack of his Sunday morning Reveille, blasted the tenth hour of my slumber with a fusilade of C notes, I believe, before the usual time. Just the same, I responded. The ground, wet and sloppy, made drills slow and disagreeable. I like snap in my drills.

News that the whole Regiment is to be confined in camp until all enlisted men are clothed, came down in the form of an order from the Commanding General—the effect of a Congressional investigation now being made to determine the reason for the lack of clothing for our soldiers. The fault is not hard to place here. At six thirty we had a lecture by some Britisher on trench mortars.

January 8th. Reveille brought me out of my bunk with a bad cold. When assembly sounded

I could only whisper "Here." It was a cold day and I was excused from outdoor work after the first hour. I studied "Modern Weapons of War" beside a good fire—a very unusual luxury. I ventured out again in the afternoon and reported to Captain McWhorter at one o'clock for instruction in grenade throwing. We had a short workout and then attended a lecture on the history of grenades, by a French Captain. He was a failure at reading English and surrendered the manuscript to Captain McWhorter, who failed even worse considering the opportunities each have had to learn the "Queen's English."

I located my long lost trunk after the lecture. It was stranded, tagless, at Chamblee. Stood retreat at four thirty and lectured N. C. O.'s on "Modern Weapons" from six to seven.

January 9th. Just like a good little soldier, I stood Reveille at the appointed hour of 5:15. I mention this fact every day because it is a daily occurrence and leaves a cold, chilly statue in my mind—a shivering pair of pajamas put aside for a uniform. Every morning I am reminded of a little ditty to one of the boys in the Second Training Camp.

J. Ed Bell
Says, "who can tell,
Whether five o'clock Reveille
Or War is hell?"

The weather man sprang a surprise attack on us during the night, and this morning we were greeted by a timid white out-of-doors instead of the rough and ruddy clay hills of Georgia. It would seem that all of this snow has come to keep the Yankee boys who are training in the South from becoming homesick. We followed an indoor program all morning. We were very pleasantly surprised at the Officers' meeting by having the restrictions keeping us confined to camp, removed, so none of us lost the half holiday. However, I did not leave camp but devoted the afternoon to study. I dined at the Hostess House with Lieutenant and Mrs. Vass.

January 10th. There is no use in repeating the fact that I stood Reveille at 5:15, but I did it, and am going to record the momentous event. After inspecting my platoon squad room I set about trying to get together enough lumber to complete a wall on an obstacle course for my physical exercises. I covered about twenty square miles of territory and stumbled into every Q. M. office in Camp Gordon. I finally got so many O. K.'s on my requisition that I was convinced its validity would not be questioned, so I quit my travels, got a wagon and attached a lumber yard. I had just loaded one load when General Cronin came along, countermanded Captain Hawkins' orders, and I had to tear out two weeks' work already completed on the

course, and unload my wagon. Such is life in the army. Afternoon spent at grenade school. Have been sick with a cold all day. A yawn, and goodnight.

January 11th. All Reveille is bad, but some Reveille is damnable. This morning was about the limit. During the night about six inches of snow fell. Then came hail and sleet. At 5:15 it was raining hard, and was pretty cold. In all of this I marched over for Reveille. Daylight did not improve the weather a bit. I call today the most disagreeable I have spent in many years, but I guess we'll get plenty of the same medicine in France. To add to the unpleasantness I discovered that the Quartermaster had failed to deposit my salary with the First National Bank of Mobile, and my checks were charged against my father's account. I had it straightened out, but of course greatly regretted it. I forgot my Sunday School lesson—not an entirely new thing with me. I did not go to grenade school for I had a bad cold and did not want to risk it in such bad weather. Lectured to Non-Coms of my platoon on "Field Fortifications." Arranged week-end and guard rosters for Officers.

January 12th. Reveille did not draw me out of a very comfortable bed, but it brought me out into the coldest weather it has ever been my experience to feel. Flat zero on a damp, misty

morning, with a twenty mile wind cutting around the corners is not so hot. We followed an indoor schedule all morning. I conducted the inspection of my platoon and lectured on target preparation the entire forenoon. At eleven thirty we were advised that we could not leave camp until we had put an allotment blank on file for every man in our Company. We were the first out. Missed dinner working on allotments. Went to Atlanta with Captain Whatley and Lieutenants Duncan and Thompson. We walked two miles, then caught a truck which we rode for four miles, then caught a street car eight miles in. Saw Neil O'Brien's Minstrels at the Atlanta. Not up to standard. Spent the night in room 104, Kimball House.

January 15th. With pneumonia running wild in army camps, I treat a bad cold with plenty of respect. I kept mine with me in bed when Reveille sounded. I did not impose the obligation of standing Reveille upon it. I did nothing, in fact, calculated to give it an excuse to rush into pneumonia and start housekeeping in my lungs. All day I kept it very well covered in bed. Captains Whatley and Hawkins called several times to see me. I was transferred to the machine gun company, but managed to wiggle out of it and stayed here with Captain Whatley, my sidekicker. A day in bed is a bad thing in quarters that are not heated. At the end of the day I feel that I would be better off if I had walked

around all day. Trotsky story of the Bolsheviki started in the Atlanta Constitution. I am afraid of this publication of radical Socialists views.

January 16th. A man is never a fool until he admits the fact himself. Since crawling out of bed, when I had been told to stay there, to stand Reveille at 5:15, I am pretty thoroughly convinced in my own case. However I did not want to stay in bed all day, and if I missed Reveille and then joined my platoon later, my men would have felt that I was just lazy and did not get up in time, and it would have made a bad impression upon them. Therefore I crawled out, much as I hated to do it. These little things count in the end. I did not stay in bed all day because I do not believe my men keep up the snap I have put into them when other officers drill them. Have had a severe headache all day. Conducted the physical drill this morning. The afternoon was a half holiday. I stayed in camp and wrote letters, almost catching up with my back correspondence. The day has been a hard one from every angle. Rain, snow and sleet, all within an hour, came down during the afternoon. I feel much better than I did about 1 p. m.

January 17th. Lest I forget the fact, I again record that I stood Reveille at 5:15. I swiped Lieutenant Thompson's bed for the night, and it was warmer at the early hour than at any time during the night. It is a strange thing.

I sleep cold, but wake up warm. Wonder if that damned bugler has anything to do with it?

Conducted physical drill of the whole company. Had a fine morning's workout with my platoon in close and extended drills, bombing exercises, bayonet work, patrolling and an hour's lecture on courtesy and discipline. My men displayed lots of pep and smartness and I was greatly pleased at the end of the morning's work. These are real men in my platoon. I like to study them. Some are Italians from the East Side whom I can hardly understand. We have had to make out naturalization papers for many of them—they are not even American citizens yet. Then there are the backwoods boys from Georgia and Alabama, slow of motion and drawling in speech, but certain of performance. Whipped into unison by training, and woven together by discipline, this All-American platoon of mine is a real fighting unit. To give it the final spark of fire is the spirit of America's Democracy. I have no qualms whatever as to how they'll behave under their first baptism of lead and shrapnel.

In the afternoon I went to bombing school, and in the competitive throwing I was best among the officers in training. I saw Major Longstreet about saddles for the battalion staff to get to target range. Had officer's school from six to seven p. m.

January 18th. Reveille sounded according to schedule at 5:15. It was pretty cold this morning. The band keeps up our courage when we come out every morning, by playing "Over There" for our march. It is only the hope of going "over there," that makes us leave those warm bunks willingly. I gave the Company physical drill from seven to seven forty-five. My platoon was joined with the third for drill and I had charge of both. I lectured to two platoons on fire distribution and control, and to the N. C. O.'s on discipline. At one o'clock I went to grenade school. It was mighty cold working there. Saw Major Longstreet and procurred saddles for Battalion staff to range. Was advised by doctor to stay in camp and not go to range because of bad weather and severe cold that has been mine now for about a week. Coal situation all over the U. S. accepted in good spirit. Some factories running without heat. Very good day, so feel good. Adios.

January 19th. After Reveille everybody began to make their bedding rolls and get ready for the march to the target range at seven o'clock. I was not required to go so I did not bother about any bedding roll. At seven the whole Regiment marched out of camp. At 8:30 I conducted the inspection of the men of Company "E" who were not required to go to the range. A humorous incident occurred at this inspection.

I came to a little black haired boy down the line who had no bayonet. I asked him, "Where is your bayonet?"

"Bayonet no got," he answered in an Italian accent.

Further along I came to a tall, sandy haired fellow, also without a bayonet. I asked him the same question, "Where is your bayonet?"

"I ain't been issued nair one yet," replied this one in a slow Southern drawl.

That is the American Army—boys from all over the world. There are twenty-eight nationalities represented in our Division.

I ordered several men to have their hair cut. Many of them have complied. I caused the whole 2nd Platoon to work one hour on their rifles as they were not satisfactorily cleaned. Went to town at one thirty and saw the show at the Lyric. Met Mrs. Pope, wife of Lieutenant Pope, after the Lyric and went to dinner at the Piedmont Hotel. Went to the Grand Theatre. Show no good. Spent the night at the Kimball House, room 410. One real fool slept alone there—yes—ONE!

January 20th. Once more I fooled the bugler at Camp Gordon. His fiendish notes failed to smite my ears and did not drag me out into the snow this morning. I slept soundly at the Kimball House in a warm steam-heated room. I left town at 6:45 in an auto for camp. The morning

was cold and the roads hard and slick with ice. We skidded twice but managed to keep topside up. There was nothing much to do around camp all day. We talked and studied bridge building. In the afternoon several ladies came out to the club. It is a great thing just to look at a girl out here. I feel nearer home every time they come. In the evening we met in the club and although it was Sunday, we could not resist the tempting music of the Victrola, and we danced some. The Lord should forgive, for I was much better for the association with the girls. Arranged a dance for Wednesday night. A bunch of us sang a few old songs when the girls were gone. Wonder what the boys all thought of as we finished off the evening with:

There's a long, long trail awinding,
Into the Land of My Dreams,
Where the nightingales are singing
And the white moon beams.

There's a long, long night of waiting,
Until my dreams all come true,
'Til the day when I'll be going down
That long, long trail with you.

January 21st. The stern, unrelenting bugle sounded its uninviting call at 5:15, and I responded like Nathan Hale went to the gallows—willing—because it was for My Country. I gave

Company "E" a good drill during the morning, in all the work required by our daily program. The whole battalion returned from the range at eleven o'clock. At one o'clock I went to the grenade court, which was sloppy and wet, and we had an hour of cold, nasty work. I nearly froze my fingers off throwing cold grenades, but I guess we won't care whether they're cold or hot when we get on the other side, so long as they make Fritzie hot. The sleet and rain started about 3:30 and continued during the night. Everything froze over. The lights went out about six o'clock and we had no officers' school nor lecture. We could not study, so we talked. A few stories of home—a dream-face in the fire—a longing to mix it with the Germans, and an all round good night.

January 22nd. It almost goes without saying that I stood Reveille at the appointed hour. There had been a heavy sleet fall during the night, and the whole country was ice-bound when we got out. All of the trees were beautifully wrapped in crystal. The "Sunny South" is never mentioned except in sarcasm now, for nowhere in the world have I seen such mean, dreary, cold and disagreeable weather. We followed an indoor schedule all day and I lectured on patrolling and marching. I always take occasion to throw in a few words on discipline and courtesy. I drilled the men on the transmission of orders—laid stress on the neces-

sity of paying strict attention by starting an order and letting the men pass it around and back to me, then comparing what I sent out with what came back. The result was amazing. The order was horribly garbled. Went to grenade school at one thirty. We drew pictures of grenade mechanisms all afternoon. Then we went over to the "Y" to hear a fool named Kemsey recommend himself considerably. He was supposed to be a song-leader, but turned out to be a clumsy acrobat. Held N. C. O.'s school. Visited my platoon to see how they fared at night. Then to bed.

January 24th. Since there was no good reason I could give for doing otherwise, I responded to that imperative call from my bunk at 5:15. The sun came out about 7:50 and melted the ice, which made things plenty sloppy. The warm weather caused an order to be issued switching from an indoor to an outdoor schedule, and we plowed through the mud for two hours. For the first time I went before the special court as judge advocate. In the first two cases I was about to hang the accused by leading questions. Chaplain Tyler said, "Young man, if you are not a lawyer you ought to be—you can handle questions well." The president of the court said, "I believe Sirmon was trained while young to know what he wanted, and to go after it. He sure went after his own kind

of evidence." At any rate all cases were convicted.

A bunch of recruits marched by this afternoon. This business of building an army! This vast mental picture of a nation preparing for war. I see the boys gathered in from the nether corners of the country come into camp. They look ridiculous, huddled together in what might be termed "mob formation," some wearing derbies, some felt hats of varied styles and colors. Then the boy with the slouch woolen headgear. Their clothes vary as much as their skypieces. Some are village cut-ups, some frightened boys from the farms; others are serious-minded business men,—all accepting the duty to which they are called. I attended a lecture on Red Cross workers in France illustrated by lantern slides. Not very interesting.

January 25th. Reveille at 5:15. Having no choice in the matter I rolled out, buckled on my overcoat and attended. The weather was much warmer. The frozen earth soon thawed out to be nothing but slushy mud. I made out and handed in records of two trials by special court. Was relieved as judge advocate on account of grenade school. Went through the morning program with my platoon. It was hard to get results on the drill ground because of the mud. At one o'clock I went to the grenade school. We had a lecture by Captain Guey on "Trench

Raids." It was very interesting and instructive. Attended officers' school at one. By the day's press I am led to believe that my ideas about the Russian Bolsheviki's influence on the outcome of the war are being borne out in Austria and Germany.

January 26th. On time at Reveille. The morning was very warm for Camp Gordon, so it pulled no eye teeth for them to get out of bed. The whole Regiment was restless for a few hours after it was announced that General Cronin would inspect one company. Review was called off because of the weather—or rather the mud. Company "G" was selected to be inspected. I inspected my own platoon and held two lectures during the morning. In the afternoon Captain Hawkins and I went horseback riding through the country. We had a fine trip, even in the mud. We returned in time for retreat at 4:55. The day's papers print reports of revolutions in Germany. If true, my patriotic task will soon be over. The strict devotion to duty will give place to a bit of vacationing around home. Let it come tomorrow, and I will not care. Not a brilliant day. I am missing a fine dance at 277 Juniper street right about now.

February 1st. Reveille has no mercy. It drug me out of bed at the unmerciful 5:15. The weather was still bad—warm enough but just a bit sloppy. We had mostly indoor work. I lectur-

ed on several subjects to my platoon. I think I shall be qualified for the Chautauqua after the war.

I had to explain War Risk Insurance to a bunch of rookies this morning. That's required by orders. I urged them to take the full ten thousand dollars. After explaining to one of them that it would only cost him six dollars and a half a month, and if he died his estate would get the $10,000, he answered:

"No, I don't want none. Ma told me to be careful. We've heerd about them games where you put in a little money and get back a lot, but I never knowed nobody that done it." He stumped me. Further explanation failed to move him.

In the afternoon I went to the grenade school for the last time. We were given a fairly stiff exam. There were fifteen questions, most all of which had several subheads. When other members of the class were answering their 9th and 10th questions I had finished mine, and I believe I will make as much as any man in the class. I am glad that I have had this opportunity to learn grenading, for it was recently new to me.

I arranged to go to Chattanooga tomorrow. The Colonel could not let me off any earlier, or I would be on my way now.

February 4th. I had been in bed for what seemed only a few minutes when I was awakened by the cruel sound of Reveille. Thank goodness it is 5:30 now instead of 5:15. That lends a little variation at least. The weather is just fine and our whole schedule was outside. We went for a three hour hike, from 7 'til 10. If the war holds out I may become a song leader. On the march we are required to sing hiking songs. It's good dope—makes the cadence better and creates a jovial spirit. I could not doubt the fine physical power, the health behind the boastful song we sang today as we stepped along Jackson Road at a hundred and twenty per minute:

"Oh the infantry, the infantry, has mud behind
their ears,
The infantry, the infantry, could drink a million
beers,
The artillery, the cavalry, and the damned old
engineers—
Well, they couldn't lick the infantry in a hundred thousand years."

In the afternoon we had several problems in attack. The way Lieutenant McGowan commanded the situation was almost enough to make me vote for woman suffrage. Officers' school 6:30 to 7:30. A letter to Nellie. Goodnight.

February 5th. Last night the weather man predicted ten degrees above for today. When I came out for Reveille at 5:30 I realized that he is some prophet. I had charge of the whole company's physical drill as usual. It never helps any man to lose his temper. I lost mine this morning. I got a bit out of humor and caused my own drill to get all jammed up. I admit my fault, and I sure won't do it again. Took charge of the whole company in the afternoon and conducted formations for advance party marches, etc. It was much warmer and all the men were feeling fine. In the evening I had my N. C. O. school. We covered estimation of situations, verbal field orders, writing of messages, etc. Studied until nine o'clock.

February 6th. I took my post at the right of my platoon at 5:30 in response to the early summons to Reveille. The morning was cool but clear, and save for the mud remaining from the former rainy days, the weather was ideal for military work. I took Company "E" in physical drill and bombing exercises, and my platoon in bayonet and close order drill and combat patrolling.

Bayonet drill is funny. A part of it consists of quickening exercises. I did not know it was possible for men to be so slow of foot. We have them play a brutalized form of "dropping the handkerchief" among other things. A

heavy belt is used instead of a hanky, and the man next door gets paddled all around the circle.

From this mild play they go to a blood-curdling lecture where they are told to get "blood in their eyes," and to "see red," to imagine that each time they stab the dummy, the Kaiser's liver will come out on the end of their bayonet. Then we put the boxing gloves on them and turn them loose on each other. We are brutalizing our men, but War is a brutal pastime.

In the afternoon we had a big Review. I was Battalion Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion. Rode a mighty wild old horse and caused quite a bit of excitement among soldiers who feared a leap in their direction. Went to Atlanta after the Review and called on Frances G—. We went to the Rathskeller at the Ansley Hotel and danced until 10:30—too late for a guy who gets up at 5:30.

February 8th. Reveille did not hurt so much this morning, for it was very warm. Went through physical drill and bombing with the company. Then went to the hospital to have my throat treated. I was sent to a throat specialist and must go every day for some time until I can talk well again. Saw Captain Whatley there. He is getting along well, it seems.

Overheard a funny conversation in the squad

room this morning. Rossi, a New York Italian, was talking to Moses, an Alabama farm lad. It finally came to this:

"Where you from, Moses?"

"Me, I'm from close to Greenville, Alabama."

"Where's Greenville, Moses, is that on a map?"

"I reckon it's on some maps, Rossi."

"Never heard of it," Rossi continued. "Why don't you move to a real town?"

"Where you from, Rossi?" asked Moses timidly.

"I'm from the only place on earth. I'm from NOO York."

"Well then," drawled Moses, "I know at least one thing more than you do. I know there's Greenville and New York in the United States, and you only know there's New York."

I did not feel so good in the afternoon and so did not go out for drill on the big parade ground. Attended officers' school from six to seven, the discussion being the application of old methods to new conditions of warfare. Feeling kind of tough so hit the hay early.

February 10th. Another night of rest broken by the call to Reveille. This gets mighty monotonous, getting up every morning before daylight and going through the same cut and dried program over and over again. But how these recruits are responding to it! Boys who were

just out of college nine months ago are barking commands with the authority of veterans today. I hear these young officers spoken of derisively sometimes as "ninety day wonders." To me they are just that in reality. Out on the drill field I listened to them today. There was an incessant chatter set up over the field as corporals, sergeants, lieutenants and captains snapped out commands and corrective comment to their respective groups scattered over the field.

I watched them once when we were at rest. All around me were companies broken up into squads. Some were doing bayonet drill, some going through deployments; others were doing close order. I wondered how many small units like these were scattered over America, drilling with the same earnestness for the "Great Adventure" ahead of them. I marveled at these little details that will be pieced together to form a solid, massive avalanche that will some day sweep all before it along the Western Front.

I spent several hours with Captain Whatley at the hospital. Went with Major Hawkins to see "Molly Dear" at the Liberty.

February 11th. Came out of it for Reveille at 5:30. I had the company for physical drill from 7 to 7:45, and for forty-five minutes bombing exercises afterward. The French instructors in grenade throwing came around to inspect our work. They marvel at the distance

and accuracy which the American soldiers display. They attribute this to the fact that the American soldier is superior in strength, but I think it is chiefly due to the fact that we are a nation of baseball fans and baseball players. Most of the soldiers know how to throw a baseball, and believe me that will count when we get into action. What wonderful grenade throwers some of our big league pitchers would make!

I took charge of my platoon and put them through a problem in attack and methods of entrenching under fire. In the afternoon I had command of the company again. We hiked out into the woods and had quite a battle along Jackson Road, in capturing an imaginary enemy. After this successful fray we returned to the company street for fifteen minutes' manual of arms and forty-five minutes bayonet work.

My men are serious at heart, but when they break out into song on the march, they always hang the war as a good joke on the other fellow. Their favorite yodel is,

"You're in the Army now,
You're not behind the plow,
You scum of the ditch,
You'll never get rich—
You're in the Army now."

Among many variations they bring this one in often,

"You're in the Army now,
You're not behind the plow,
You ne'er-do-well,
You're bound for hell,
You're in the Army now."

Took Fawcett on again and charged him nothing for another black eye with the gloves. Officers' school was a farce. Studied until ten o'clock and retired for some needed shut-eye.

February 12th. Rolled out for Reveille at 5:30. Went out for a company problem given by Brigadier General Cronin, the Brigade Commander. Lieutenant McGowan was in command and messeed things up pretty badly to start with. After the problem the General informed me that I had been selected as his Aide de Camp. I served in the Philippine Constabulary with the General. Hope to get orders for my transfer within a few days. I had the company in the afternoon. Had a hard rain between one and one thirty. Lieutenant Anderson lectured to the company until 2.30. We then had a tactical problem for N. C. O.'s. I instructed special company grenadiers. Studied until 10:30 then went to a tired soldier's bed.

February 15th. What of Reveille now? I did not move when the bugle sounded this morning. Orders for my appointment as Aide to General Cronin came out last night. Rode over to liaison school at 9:30 and returned at 11:00.

Started on the telegraph code, sending and receiving. Moved from 325th quarters to Brigade Headquarters. In the afternoon I worked on papers in the office. General Cronin had his Field Officers and Captains out to review the week's work in minor tactics. After supper I went with the General and Lieutenant Maddox to see "Bringing Up Father Abroad" at the Liberty Theatre. The show was fair. Afterwards I went to a dance given at the 326th Clubhouse. It was about like the show—just fair.

February 18th. Didn't feel so fresh this morning—could have used about four hours' more sleep quite handily. It isn't the bugle notes that electrify me in the morning any more. It is the soft whisper of a Georgia plantation negro—"Lieutenant, de General's gittin up." That's the signal for me to highball it out of bed, and invariably I beat the General to it by a matter of seconds. Went to liaison school at 9:30 and was there until 11. Looked for mail at the postoffice, but nothing came. In the afternoon all officers were given a psychiatric test. It was great fun. New stuff to me, this dope that spots your accuracy of observation and knowledge of general events. I understand that Hollywood reacted to these tests with the general average of colonels in the army, so the old saying "beautiful but dumb" as applied to our movie colony is a misnomer. Attended a lecture in the afternoon by Colonel Applin of

the British Army on "The Tactical Use of Machine Guns." It was very interesting and instructive. After supper visited officers down in my old Regiment, the 325th. Studied for about an hour after I came home, and then recorded the day's events.

February 19th. Reveille did not bring me out of bed, but I had a feeling that I ought to be up when General Cronin came out of his room, so 5:50 found me dressed. I took the physical drill with the Headquarters Detachment. Went through a bit of paper work during the early hours of the morning. At 10:30 went to a lecture on discipline by Colonel Applin. It was one of the finest I ever heard and I believe he held his audience better than any orator I have ever heard. He was cheered for thirty minutes after he had finished. In the afternoon I waded through papers for a few hours and then studied wireless. Visited my old Regiment and came near getting lynched by the officers of Company "E" for recommending two of their best men to be transferred to Headquarters. I tried writing a few old friends after supper, but gee, it was hard work. I am a poor correspondent.

February 23rd. Took Reveille again for Lieutenant Heron. Had physical drills and inspection. Major Kountze was in charge of the inspection. He doesn't seem to be a very close observer. He didn't notice anything at all

wrong at stable inspection. One can hardly expect W. de Lancy Kountze, next head of one of New York's private banking institutions to worry about little details. With his age, his wealth, his wife and his children, I admire this man greatly for stepping out to do his bit.

Met Miss G— at the Y. W. C. A. and with her and her sister had lunch there. Mrs. Whipple, Mrs. Knight and Miss Metz were also visitors of mine from South Georgia. Met Patie S—, Frances G— and Evelyn C— at Five Points at four o'clock and we went out to the Liberty to see "Fair and Warmer." It was a fine show. Returning, we took a taxi as Miss S— can't ride the trolley, it makes her sick. I was afraid it would make me sick to ride the taxi, and I mention this only in memory of our chauffeur, the only one I have ever met who really had a heart. He had compassion toward a poor soldier's pocketbook, and taking in the situation at a glance, let me off easy.

February 27th. Got out to Reveille at 5:30. I'll sure be glad when my two weeks' trick at Reveille is over. Took the Headquarters Detachment for two hours in bayonet, bombing and close order. Stood an exam at liaison school in the elementary electricity we had been over. In the afternoon took the detachment in information tests, carrying of messages and ordinary engineering. Inspected stables. In the evening went to see "Kick In" with Major Hawkins of

the 325th at the Liberty. It was well played but not enough laugh in the plot to suit the boys. We like to laugh. "Keep up your smile" is our slogan, and we don't want any tragic stuff dampening our ardor. Through the day and in barracks at night, the men are singing:

"Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag
And smile, smile, smile.
While you've a lucifer to light your fag,
Smile boys, that's the style.
What's the use of worrying,
It never was worth while,
So pack up your troubles in your old kit bag
And smile, smile, smile."

Nothing tragic or melodramatic in that!

Things look more like France now, so with a joyful heart "Here's to the Day."

February 28th. Since the weather has turned its bright side to us and stopped freezing the water pipes every morning, Reveille doesn't bother me much. Was out at 5:50. Took the detachment in bayonet, bombing and close order drill. At liaison school the instructors went over yesterday's examination. I got sixteen out of the twenty questions exactly right, and one totally wrong. In the afternoon I had information tests and carrying of messages. Went to the camp Quartermaster and got pay checks for officers of Brigade Headquarters. This warm weather does my Filipino blood good.

Things continue to point a positive finger toward France. Everyone feels that it won't be long now, and hearts are light and songs plentiful. We want the Huns!

March 1st. Walter did not know, when he whispered, "De Gin'rals gittin up Sah" so early this morning, what a day he was breaking me into. I took the detachment in bombing and close order drill and bayonet exercises from 7:30 to 9. Took notes on electrical motors at liaison school. Had a bit of paper work in the early afternoon and cleaned it out. Went to town with Lieutenant Maddox. We brought Barbara B—— and Frances N—— of Atlanta out for dinner. We enjoyed General Cronin very much. He is a great humorist. Went to see "Baby Mine" at the Liberty. It was great, too. After the theatre we went to a ball at the 326th Infantry Club. Believe me those two girls were rushed some. We lost them soon after they were introduced, but claimed them for "Home, Sweet Home." A fine moonlight ride home and we called it a day. This is a stomp-down good Army!

March 3rd. Sunday used to be the Sabbath when I was a very little boy. When I became older I learned that it is the seventh day of the week. Now I know it as the day that has no Reveille. I did not bounce out of bed at the insolent sharps and flats of the trumpeter's bugle, but continued on in quiet slumber, the su-

preme pleasure of a rookie's life. In the afternoon went out on horseback with Lieutenant Hoffert. We came to a cross-road—a finger pointed down one of them to Decatur. Knowing two young girls at Agnes Scott College, I followed the direction of the pointed finger. I met Cathryn G—— at the College. She is a lively little girl, but no match for her sister Frances, whom I called on this evening. Got in mighty late and had to exert some real effort to keep from going to sleep on my horse.

March 4th. Late hours last night did not sharpen the desire to get out this morning, when Uncle Sam became boss again, but I just had to get out. Went to liaison school. It is getting beyond the elementary stages now, and is causing me some concern. Various types of motors are not everyday acquaintances of mine and I am not forming much of an affinity for them. Reported to the grenade school at one o'clock and heaved a few live ones, or rather I went for that purpose but no grenades had been loaded. A few shots of live B. S. from Captain McWhorter was about the only explosion we heard. We had a twenty-five page French lesson for the evening. I can't Parle much Francaise.

March 5th. Did not have to go out for Reveille, but Walter's inevitable "De Gin'rals gittin up" compelled me to part with my blankets much earlier than I was naturally inclined to do. Gave the detachment physical drill, bayonet,

close order and bombing between 7 and 9:30. Went to liaison school and took a big notebook, but didn't catch much to put into it. I realized that I must get some kind of a textbook on motors before I accomplished much in this wireless business. Did not go to the grenade court. Gave the detachment a test in general information, and carrying messages. To carry a message and deliver it verbatim seems to be a rare achievement among men of ordinary intelligence. An hour's study at French and two hours on various other subjects, and I was ready for the downy.

March 7th. It is understood that General Cronin does not like to have any of us in bed on working days after 6 a. m. I was until 6:12 getting to breakfast, but of course there was no room for kicking at that. Took the detachment through all the usual drills. If they don't know how to handle themselves after all this intensive training, they're lost. At liaison school we hitched into radiotelegraphic instruments and a study of wave motion and magnetic flux, which entirely bewildered me. In the afternoon Major Kountze and Lieutenant Maddox left on leave of absence. I took over the duties of the Adjutant, Major Kountze. In the evening I visited a number of friends down at the 325th Infantry. I bumped squarely into a quart of Scotch (smuggled) surrounded by three of my friends and a guitar. Conviviality had already

taken hold when I arrived. It did not take long for me to become infected.

I have been told that I can't sing, but I thought I filled out the quartet rather effectively, especially on the old Regular Army special:

"I wish I was in the happy land
Where rivers of beer abound.
Sloe ginrickeys hangin' on the trees
And highballs rollin' on the ground.
What? Highballs rollin' on the ground?
Sure! Highballs rollin' on the ground."

Everybody was preparing for the range when I got back, and it's a good thing for me that I don't have to follow them.

March 8th. My luck usually runs counter to superstition, but this being an unlucky Friday did not bring any luck to me. I got out at 6, just as I do on any other day. Gave the detachment what I thought was a swift two hours' physical drill, bayonet, bombing and close order. Went to liaison school and bothered my feeble intellect with a few futile efforts to understand Mr. Benjamin Franklin's chained lightning. In the afternoon, grenade school. Heaved some French grenades "over the top" and was graduated as "competent to instruct." General Cronin's French class lost precedence to a dinner engagement, so I am free to snooze tonight.

March 10th. Being out until the small hours last night kept me in bed until 8:15. Received word through Captain Whatley that the Misses Eleanor O—— of LaGrange and Ethel P—— would be out this afternoon. Had dinner with Lieutenant Hoffert at the 326th Infantry mess. At 5 o'clock I met the ladies at the Hostess House. They are very attractive girls and I enjoyed showing them around the camp. Had dinner with Colonel and Mrs. La Trobe at the Ansley. They are old friends of mine from the Philippines. Called to see Frances G., and spent an evening that no old soldier has a right to complain of. Reached camp at 2:10 A. M. feeling all to the merry, and wish I could have made it later!

March 11th. I awoke tardily this morning with the affairs of the Brigade Headquarters office resting heavily upon my shoulders. With General Cronin and Major Kountze both away, it leaves me the senior officer of our household. Gave the detachment physical drill at seven o'clock. Had a load of paper work to do so did not take charge of any drills. Went to the Divisional Adjutants' meeting at 9:30. In the afternoon went to liaison school for an hour and a half. Afterwards went to the base hospital to see Captain R. J. Whatley. Poor boy, an X-ray examination showed that he has the symptoms of tuberculosis, and will be ordered somewhere

out west. I hope a few weeks will completely cure him. He is the best pal I ever had, and he wants a shot overseas too. I studied French for awhile, then the loss of sleep forced me to bed.

March 13th. It was almost two o'clock this morning before I got to bed. I slept until six however and only the call of duty got me out to work. Took the detachment in bayonet work and close order. It is tedious, but interesting work, training the detachment. The Sergeant Major is the only Regular Army man among them. The others are boys who were ribbon clerks, farmers, mechanics and what have you, only a few months ago.

Some of them seem so helpless. They have not developed any aggressiveness, no fighting spirit. They are just good-natured boys. Now we are putting every weapon of slaughter we have into their hands. Grinding the evenness of their temper away. Teaching them to hate, to fight and KILL!

But the war is not of our making or our choosing. They know it, and I marvel at the rapidity of their transformation, though the humdrum of training becomes terrible at times.

I substituted signal work for bombing, as all of our grenades had been taken from us. Went to liaison school at the regular hour. It sounded pretty far off to me, as I slept with my eyes

open. In the afternoon I went to see Colonel Whitman of the 325th. Inspected stables at 5 o'clock. Took retreat for Lieutenant Heron. Invited Major Hawkins to dine with me. We had a very nice evening. We discussed the odds against our going to France soon, and figured them but few. Recent transfers of men out of this Division looks like we don't move though, damn it.

March 17th. Did not rush out of bed at a very creditable hour this morning. Spent the early hours sleeping comfortably at the Aragon Hotel. At eleven o'clock I met Frances N—— at the Georgian Terrace. Went to the Episcopal Church with her and friends. Enjoyed an excellent luncheon at the home of Mrs. Dobbs, a sister of Asa Candler, at "Glengaraugh" in Druid Hills. There were several young people present, and we had a very lively St. Patrick's Day luncheon. Went to the train to see Miss S——, but the damned thing had departed. We then went to the Auditorium entertainment for the soldiers. Called on Frances G—— at eight o'clock. A busy day and a pleasant one. These two Frances girls keep me stepping.

March 18th. Stood Reveille at 5:30. General Cronin returned from Washington on an early morning train. I took the Headquarters Detachment in all kinds of infantry training from 7 to 9. Liaison school as usual. It isn't so easy

to gather all of Lieutenant Thomas's dope on "currents" and "circuits," etc. Now blackboard instruction is getting tiresome. With all the various kinds of training I am getting, I wonder sometimes, just how we are going to fight the Germans. Thomas seems to favor electrocuting them. (He gassed us plenty today.) In the afternoon I took the detachment in liaison work. Inspected stables and took retreat at 5:30. Went to Atlanta after retreat and said goodbye to Frances G—— who will return to Vidalia tomorrow. She is an unusually pretty girl, Interesting, too.

March 19th. When the damned old bugle blew it jerked a mighty successful sleeper out of bed. I took the Headquarters Detachment for physical drill, close order, bayonet and bombing. Stayed at liaison school from 9 until 1 p. m. I was surely some sick after a good shot of paratyphoid serum yesterday afternoon. Today I got right down and out and went to bed. However I did not stay long for Major Hawkins came for me to go as witness in the case of Captain Uhler. I was to bear witness that at inspection the Captain, in calling the roll of his Company, called some funny named Italian "Barrell of Cabbage." He did it all right, but somebody answered "Here," so I forgot it. Evidently the Major didn't. Silly, Captain! too much dignity, Major! It was a very misty,

damp afternoon. I waited until four o'clock but was never called to testify in the case at all. I don't intend to go any more.

March 21st. I was reluctant about Reveille as usual. Once outside, and a snappy workout at physical drill, and the old pep is restored. At 7:30 I was at the head of our detachment, hiking to the drill field as we kept step to,

"K-K-K-Katie, beautiful Katie,
You're the only g-g-g-girl that I adore,
When the m-m-m-moonshines, over the cow-shed,
I'll be waiting at the k-k-k-kitchen door."

After drill I began to pack up my little suitcase and got ready for home. I have six days leave. Left camp for Atlanta at 11 a. m. Delays along the way held me back and I did not get to town until 2 o'clock. Shopping took up most of my time until the train left at 6:50 over the L. & N. for Mobile. There were a good many very jolly people on the Pullman, and they kept me out of my bunk until well past midnight. By mistake I was sold a Pullman ticket in a berth occupied by a young lady from New York. By accident we were placed together in the diner. I wonder if she thinks I engineered the party?

March 22nd. Arrived in Mobile at 5:10 a. m. Had to wait about an hour for a car out to

Crichton. Had a joyful meeting with all of the family. Father had caught the first car into town to meet me. He came back out about nine o'clock. Saw many of my old friends around the streets. Went to town in the afternoon for awhile to see the crowds. Several of the girls came down in the afternoon to see my sister. In the evening I was invited to the home of my cousin, Mrs. Damrill, and we had a real old family reunion. Played cards until about one a. m. All of my cousins are delightful. Alene Newton presented me with an engraved Testament with an American flag in it. The little talk she made was very nice indeed. I appreciate the fine sentiment that prompted the deed.

March 23rd. It was certainly a joy never to be forgotten, to snooze peacefully during the early morning hours and not be disturbed by the braying of restless buglers. I did not get up until after eight o'clock. Went down to my brother-in-law's store and stopped all the girls who passed, for a short chat. I enjoyed Ruth and Gladys very much. They spent a couple of hours at home with me. Dan and Hattie, with their children, arrived from Perdido. The afternoon was not very much different. In the evening I arranged a theatre party. I took Ruth for my part of said party. "When Dreams Come True," at the Lyric, was a fairly good play—a musical comedy.

March 24th. Sunday is a fine day to sleep when you are not within the range of Reveille. The early spring in Mobile is very conducive to late rising. The sunshine just looks in everywhere and smooths the sharp edges of the weather, and persuades you that it is absolutely unnecessary to move. I did not get out of bed until assured that ten minutes would be as long as breakfast would wait. Went down and stood on the corner across from the church, and watched the spring showing of ladies' finery. It seems so much easier for those who have nice clothes to do their Christian duty. Went to town with Father, Dan and Ed in the afternoon. Spent my last evening at home with my people.

March 25th. I realized that this would be my last morning away from the military, so I used it to the very best advantage—I slept until 8:10. Went to town with Father at ten o'clock and borrowed a hundred dollars from the First National Bank. All of my relatives were down at the train to say good-bye. It was our last parting until Germany has been defeated, or something happens to me in the process. But thank heaven I have people who can send me away with a smile. I believe we parted as painfully as anybody ever has, but not a tear. They know that I am doing a man's part in the greatest cause on earth. What a joy it is to fight for them! I left Mobile at 12:40 p. m. and arrived in Atlanta at 2:20 a. m.

April 1st. Not because I had caught up with my sleep and was tired of bed, but because a good hard day's work stared me in the face, I got out by main force at 6:30, new time, mind you. Took the Headquarters Detachment one hour in general infantry training, close order drill, bayonet work and bombing. Drill, drill, drill—will it never end? But that's the only way to make an Army. At liaison school we had a lecture on front line net work that was very interesting. In the afternoon there were tests in information and message transmission. I took a course in auto and motorcycle driving. It all came back to me pretty well. Spent some time at the 325th Officers Club. Studied for a few minutes before bed-time, and then got an early start for dreamland.

April 2nd. No Reveille interests me any more. This week Lieutenant Heron does the honors for the detachment. I got out at 6:30, gave the outfit close order drill, bombing and bayonet work till 9:30. At liaison school we had a review of condensers and T. P. S. sets. Tests on messages and information for the men in the afternoon. Doggone, if this bunch don't know their fighting onions when we set sail for France, it sure won't be our fault. Things were not so fast after retreat, so I wandered down to the 325th. Lieutenant Whelchel, feeling downhearted too, joined me in a little practice driv-

ing the auto. We practiced as far as Decatur, got Miss A—— and Miss Erma M—— and had a very delightful practice trip to Atlanta. Returned to camp at 2 a. m. with our cares packed away in our little old kit bags, and confident of our ability to drive an automobile.

April 3rd. I was rudely disturbed at 6:30 by the presence of one Ethiopian, Walter, tapping gently but firmly on my door, just loud enough to jerk the kinks out of me but not loud enough to bother the General in the next room. He's an expert at the business of waking sleepers. I had the drill of the detachment from 7 to 9:15. At liaison school we had a review of former work——nothing new. Everybody left camp at 4 o'clock for town. I took Lieutenant Wood for a ride in the motorcycle. At 7:30 I took a car for Decatur, and took Hallie A—— to Atlanta. She is a very lovely girl, but young. Returned to Camp Gordon at 11:30. It was a night for much rejoicing, for it marked the end of a perfect day.

April 4th. My night of perfect comfort was broken up at 6 a. m. I pushed my feet under the table at 6:30 and inflicted severe losses on a tastily prepared breakfast. Had the detachment for awhile. News that we were getting ready to move overseas came down, and liaison school and everything else was forgotten as we set about getting things ready for movement

upon a moment's notice. It was a great feeling that came with those overseas orders. Something I have looked forward to for a long time. I want to go over. Not for the possible glory of it, but to give my life humbly for the only thing on God's green earth that feels near and dear to me—My Country. All that I love is here.

April 5th. The excitement that expectations of an early departure has created caused me to get out of bed and start packing early. There seems to be some life left in me now. The overseas orders have kindled the flame that almost goes out up here, away from the enlisted men with nothing definite to do. We marked all officers' equipment during the morning. The afternoon was quiet. I got a car at 6:30 and went to Decatur. Escorted Miss A—— to the dinner dance at the Piedmont Driving Club. The 325th Infantry had a very delightful party there. I had a good time but there were so many girls there was hardly a chance to change partners, so things were often slow. Got back to camp at 11:30 after delays on account of "no gas" along the road.

April 6th. This day of the big parade in Atlanta began with a scowl, clouds hung low and fog drifted in through the windows. However, the clouds lifted about 10 o'clock. General Cronin and staff left camp in autos at 11 o'clock.

We met our horses at Piedmont Park and at one o'clock General Cronin took command of 8,000 troops and we moved out for the march through the city. There was a great throng of people everywhere. There was little cheering; everybody seemed to be sad. Being an Aide in the big parade is too conspicuous for me. After the parade I had lunch with Miss N—— and Miss T——. We met Lieutenant Whipple and spent about two hours at the Ansley. At 8:30 we filled dates at the Decatur dance; I escorted Miss A——. Had midnight lunch and returned to camp at 3 a. m. in the rain.

April 7th. Last night I failed to get in all the dark hours usually devoted to sleep, so I used about four hours of this morning's daylight to compensate the loss. Packed away all of our office records. We had a delightful luncheon. Major Kountze's and Lieutenant Maddox's families being with us, in addition to two young ladies, Miss Arkwright and Miss Murphy. I was not in on the lady deal—to my pleasure. I confined my attention to the old folks and children. Went to see Miss N—— at 7. It was raining and the trip was a bum one. Received a little keepsake for France from Frances N——. Returned to camp at 12. Brought Lieutenant Pinkussohn out with me.

April 8th. I had no one to call me this morning and was guilty of oversleeping. Not be-

cause I was too lazy to get up, but because I need sleep so badly that I cannot break away from it once I am hidden in its oblivion. I tried the detachment in a little infantry work, but slow drizzling rain interfered. I read a few of the Articles of War to them. In the afternoon I assisted in the general instruction in liaison work. Today has been very drizzly and mean—a typical blue Monday for me. I have wanted something. God knows what, but I've wanted something. I went down to the 325th looking for a gloom chaser, but nothing seemed to relieve the spell blue Monday had cast upon me. I'll sleep it off.

April 9th. Got out at 6 o'clock. It seems to me that hour comes more than sixty minutes before the old 6 o'clock. Took the detachment in close order drill. Major Kountze went to town, sick, and the duties of Brigade Adjutant fell to me. Attended adjutant's meeting at Division Headquarters. Cleaned up all papers in the office before noon. Gave the detachment a round at liaison work in the afternoon. Visited the 325th for an hour. Had dinner with General and Mrs. Cronin and Colonel and Mrs. Thomas. It was a delightful evening, with the exception of the powerful kick administered by the General's cigar. Hit the hay at 10 bells.

April 11th. Was a little late for Reveille. In fact I got out late enough to be absent from

formation, arriving just as the detachment was being dismissed. The telephone was ringing incessantly. Everybody was blue, for some reason, probably because tomorrow we leave for the land of fighting men, the Frontier of Freedom, where the flower of all the Allied armies are pouring their life blood into the struggle against autocratic Germany. I took the automobile and went to Decatur. Saw Cathryn G—— at Agnes Scott College, and took Hallie A—— for a ride. Both girls sent me away with a smile, all right, and I'll get ten Huns each for them.

Many years after the war is over, if I am among the living, I will recall the chorus of the song, sung almost in whispers tonight—

"Smile the while, you kiss me sad adieu,
When the clouds roll by I'll come to you—
Then the skies will seem more blue,
Down in lover's lane, my dearie,
Wedding bells will ring so merrily,
Every tear will be a memory;
So wait and pray each night for me
'Til we meet again."

It's my guess that many of the boys will remember it.

CHAPTER II.

The Crossing

April 12th. I was out of bed bright and early. "The Day" is here. We move—and every heart is glad that this day marks the beginning of a great adventure for the cause of Freedom. I have always felt this day coming, ever since the Huns first talked about "scraps of paper." There is another—the day my hand shall actually strike in combat for America and Liberty. I am sad, yet happy. The smile submerges everything.

There's nothing really funny,
Yet somehow all the while,
This day we start to moving
I just can't help but smile.

Frances N—— and Aline T—— came out to say adieus. Promptly at 2:30 we pulled out of Camp Gordon, with Companies "C" and "D" of the 320th Machine Gun Battalion. Everything was comfortable for travel. There were a few wives and sweethearts down to shed a last tear with some of the boys, but as a whole the outfits were very cheerful. I can't describe my feelings. At 9 o'clock we were in Greenville, South Carolina.

April 13th. En Route to Camp Upton, N. Y. Climbed out of my berth at 7 o'clock and had breakfast with General Cronin. We arrived in Lynchburg, Virginia, about 9. Were met there by a Red Cross unit and treated very nicely. Stopped for almost an hour at Monroe to exercise the men. The country through which we passed was beautiful. All of the people along the way waved handkerchiefs and flags as we passed—quite different from sections of Georgia and South Carolina, where the people are less demonstrative. We arrived in Washington at 6:10 p. m. About all I saw was the Washington Monument and the Capitol from the train windows. We were side-tracked in the coach yard for three hours, leaving at 9:15 and I am writing this in Baltimore. The travel accommodations are great.

April 14th. En Route. Although we are traveling, and no braying bugle disturbs our morning snooze, General Cronin wills that we conform as nearly as possible to our camp schedule. I had breakfast at 8 o'clock, which is not so late by Eastern time. All along the way now people wave the Stars and Stripes in our honor, and cheer us as we pass. At 9 o'clock we came into Jersey City. Every whistle along the track, both train and factory, was held down as we passed. We loaded onto a ferry and went up East River. I saw the Statue of Liberty for

the first time. How impressive that emblem of freedom! What a welcome to every people into the greatest country on earth. I was deeply impressed by the view of our great New York. We arrived at Camp Upton about 4 o'clock. The camp is below the standard of Camp Gordon and poorly policed.

April 15th. Camp Upton, N. Y. I was in no hurry to get out of bed this morning, and only the desire to be up ahead of General Cronin caused me to resign the covers at 7:30. We spent the morning getting the camp policed sufficiently well to live in without feeling creepy at sight of so much debris piled around us. Lieutenant Maddox invited me on a party with him in New York. Cost us $20 to get in, but we made it. We arrived at the Biltmore at 8 o'clock, got a sandwich and beat it to the New Amsterdam theatre where we saw "My Rainbow Girl"—a fine show. Went to Zeigfeld's Midnight Frolic afterward. Met Ann Pennington in reality for the first time. Took two of the Zeigfeld girls out for the evening. Saw the bright lights of Broadway for the first time. Some lights. Some heterogeneous mass of humanity. Derelicts. Degenerates. High flyers. Red nosed old roues. Bankers and chorus girls. Distinguished actors. Society women. Newsboys and chauffeurs. All basking in the calcium glare—for what, I don't know. The sky-

line of this great metropolis is more impressive than its sidewalks.

April 16th. Hotel Biltmore. I was awakened by the telephone bell at 11:40. Lieutenant Heron was calling from the Yale Club, across the street. He and the General are stopping there. Had a wee bite of breakfast, and later met a friend of Maddox's, Joe Whitehead of the Naval Flying Corps. Then the bunch of us met every theatrical man in New York, it seemed. We met three sweet girls of the stage and spent about three hours with them. Then a $22 dinner at the Biltmore (small matter to millionaires, but rather startling to me). We took the girls to Zeigfeld's after the show "Seven Days Leave" at the Century, and then went to the Century Grove. After the roof frolic met three Zeigfeld stars and went to Stanley's—12 miles out. We danced and celebrated generally, and the sun drove us home by peeping up out of the Atlantic while the party was still riding high.

April 17th. New York City. I am unable to record the fact that I got out of bed this morning, for the simple reason that I did not go to bed at all last night. After our party at Stanley's I delivered one of Mr. Zeigfeld's Follies to her rich apartment, yanked Bob to his senses and climbed aboard the 10:32 train for Camp Upton. Met General Cronin face to face the first damned thing. My New York trip was

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

The 82nd Crosses the Atlantic.

great, but all good things must have an end. It's funny, the place didn't seem so big to me. Probably because I didn't see much but the inside of hotels and theatres and road houses, and didn't get much chance to see anything by daylight. I only realized that the buildings were so big when I'd get out of an elevator after we had gone down about ten floors and discovered we had stopped for another passenger and had ten more floors to drop. After Maddox had paid all expenses of the trip, I lost my pocketbook coming home.

April 18th. Camp Upton, N. Y. At 7:30 a. m. I came back to the realities of life from a land of wonderful dreams. I can forget Zeigfeld's and the Century Grove in the daytime, but they draw me back about midnight. I went over to breakfast and was asked by General Cronin, "who stood Reveille?" Evidently my expression answered his question, for he added, "Nobody, eh?" And I had to say "Yes, Sir." He assured me in no unmistakable terms that vacation days were over. The day was a very dreary, rainy one. I gave the men a little instruction in signal work, but most of the day was spent discussing the various things a fellow could do if he had unlimited time and money. New York raises such questions in a fellow's mind. I secured passes for three of our men to go down and contribute their hard earned shek-

els to the fund of New York's pleasure dispensers. Had dinner with Dr. Paul Baker at the Officers' Club. Met several old friends from Gordon.

There are many negro officers here. They are causing some stir among our Southern enlisted men. Some of the negroes insist on being saluted. They took one colored captain to the hospital this afternoon. He stopped one of our Alabama corporals and demanded a salute. He got it—right smack in the eye. He should have tried to stop a truck instead; he'd be out of the hosiptal a lot sooner.

General Bell says we can't go overseas if there is any more trouble. Foolish old man. You cannot change a Southerner. We will NOT salute your negroes! War or no war, army discipline or else, it just cannot be done. Better get these colored shavetails away from this place, General, if you want peace.

April 19th. Camp Upton, N. Y. When I went to bed last night the reaction from the sleepless nights in New York came on in great shape and I just kept right on pounding the old ear. Got up at 7:30 and was kept busy during the forenoon with my drills. Gave the men a little workout to keep them from forgetting that they are still really soldiers. In the afternoon I was charged with the task of filling a 3,000 capacity auditorium for Madame Frances Alda of the

Metropolitan Opera Company. I did it by having 3,000 men marched up by order of the Brigade Commander. Her "million dollar" voice did not appeal to the uneducated taste of our boys, and I had to lock the doors after about three songs to keep her audience inside—an unusual distinction, I should say.

April 20th. Camp Upton, N. Y. Out of bed at 7:30. Gee, I'm getting to be a regular banker. Gave the detachment physical drill and an inspection. General Cronin went to New York, and took our clerk along with him. The adjutant was away and the Sergeant-Major was in bed drunk. Then the work set in. Orders galore began to rain from Headquarters. The more I tried to get the Sergeant-Major to get up, the tighter he clung to his bunk. I dived into the work headlong, though. Got a little fellow in to help some, and spent one more day trying to make everything come out even. When nightfall arrived things were cleared up pretty good, and orders for our early departure came in. I am glad only a few hours separate me from the old ship for France.

April 21st. Camp Upton, N. Y. I was out of bed at a good respectable hour. Everything was torn up and packed away. We got in touch with General Cronin and Lieutenant Maddox in New York. I made all preparations for our departure. The General arrived at one o'clock.

I scooted about and got passenger lists, qualification cards and everything for our officers and men, though it took me half the afternoon to get Division Headquarters to let me go ahead with my work. All cots, blankets, etc. have been loaded and shipped, so we borrowed blankets from the 326th to roll up in and snooze through tonight. I am very, very glad to leave Camp Upton, the home of Greater New York's own. And to think that we are on the threshold of our final step to France.

April 22nd. Camp Upton, N. Y. No bugle got me out this morning. I was the messenger of ill omen myself, to disturb the slumbers of our officers at 4:30 a. m. We had a very light breakfast. Long before the sun came up the commands of officers and the dull tread of thousands of feet were heard over Camp Upton as our boys began to move. At 6:30 one trainload after another began to pull out of the station. At 9:45 we had reached the ferry landing and were promptly loaded aboard the ferry "Scranton." We were transferred to the Cunard docks and after some delay were sent aboard the good ship "Mauretania," one of the fastest afloat. By evening we were settled, and after a very good dinner went to bed hoping that we would be on our way to Liverpool by morning.

April 23rd. Aboard S. S. Mauretania. There was no reason for me to be on deck at an early

hour, so I stayed in the hay until 9 o'clock. I was surprised to find the Mauretania still tied up to the dock. To our sorrow too, we were told that the steering gears were damaged, and that we would have to split up and sail on other ships. The Mauretania is a real palace. We don't know what is to be our lot now. Some claim that German spies are responsible for the damage to the gears, but I could not verify that. There were two or three hundred men who were absent without leave, who reported on the dock during the day, but could not be brought on board.

I sat up far into the night with Lieutenant Maddox and friends of the 325th. It cost me just $34.00 to the chip.

April 24th. Aboard S. S. "Karmala." Again I took advantage of the absence of necessity and stayed in bed until 8:50. I distributed morning papers over the ship. There was lots of moving around, but nothing except freight was unloaded during the morning. The debarkation of troops began at 2 p. m. The 10,000 troops aboard were divided among three smaller ships. We drew the "Karmala," a Peninsular and Oriental boat that used to run into the Orient. "Karmala" means "good luck"—and I hope it's not a misnomer. General Cronin's ideas of how to embark our troops, and those of the ship's company were at variance, and as

they did not get together and straighten out their differences, there was a great deal of confusion in loading, which lasted far into the night. I had charge of our detachment and got it settled comfortably on the Karmala.

April 25th. S. S. Karmala. Still the necessity for early rising is absent, and I slumbered on until 8:15. The work of placing troops aboard ship, and loading provisions for feeding them, was completed by 9:30. Some of the men are very poorly provided for, but it is war time and nobody can grouse much and get away with it, or at least get much sympathy. The boys adapt themselves with little complaint. As we left the pier every man was ordered below deck, and as we sailed out of New York harbor not a uniform could be seen. Anyone watching us from the shore might have imagined the Karmala a ghost ship putting out to sea without any particular objective in mind.

We joined a vast convoy just off Sandy Hook. I counted 33 ships at one time. As we picked up speed however, the convoy spread out over the Atlantic and soon only twelve vessels were visible close by. They looked wonderful in their war paint, following in formation one of our great men of war. A dirigible balloon and two seaplanes hovered over us. Thus started about 5,500 men for France. "Good-bye, Broadway, Hello, France."

April 26th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. A day at sea is ordinarily quiet. There was nothing unusual about this one. The submarine dangers do not bother anyone. There seems to be no difference between this and any other voyage for pleasure, Europe bound. In the afternoon the order to abandon ship was given and 2,000 men went through boat drill. The decks were packed with men from bow to stern, all in formation. Our course changes frequently and we have no way of telling what route our convoy is following. The news bulletin from Washington is encouraging. The new offensive launched by Germany seems to be breaking down. Many of our officers and men are very homesick. I could feel better myself. I recall that the third day out of San Francisco, May 19th, 1913, was similar to this and I sympathize with them all. It is not a pleasant thing to leave the homeland for the first time. The way ahead seems fraught with misgivings, and there is no way of telling what the next few days will bring forth.

April 27th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. There has been nothing other than the ordinary routine aboard ship today. In the afternoon the sea became a little restless, and tossed our good ship about, to the end that many of our sturdy landsmen hit the rail. We had boat drill at 5:30 and assigned boat crews to life boats. If we are torpedoed I know the men will get up on deck

much faster than they do in practice, or some of them will surely be lost. One or two are always missing. No thrills have fallen to us yet—not even a false alarm. However, we have the war zone to look forward to. We have so much confidence that we never think about old Kaiser Bill and his submarines. They may come, but they'll not get us.

April 28th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. The Chaplain was the only man at our table this morning who had forgotten that it was the Sabbath. When I add that he could not finish his breakfast, the reason is apparent. Altogether it was the roughest day we have had—old Neptune must have slept badly, for he tossed his watery covers restlessly, to the discomfiture of many of our passengers. All along the rail I could see seasick soldiers, and on and on, in every direction, just water. In all this though, I felt good myself. General Cronin directed the trial of Private Dean for absence without leave, and closed me up when I mentioned the Sergeant-Major—the first time I've had to allow an enlisted man to go rough-shod over me.

April 29th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. There is only one difference between any two days at sea —one may be rough and the other calm. The General gets ruffled a great deal more than the sea, however, and causes us to forget much of the motion of the boat. This has been anything

but the blue Monday one would expect out here in mid-Atlantic. The spirit of officers and men is wonderful. There is no complaining, no blaming the world for their misfortunes. As one poor seasick soldier put it, "Oh, but that damned Kaiser will pay for this." They are on their way to make the Kaiser pay and nothing else matters. The routine drills went off fine today. Few hitches and delays occurred. Another day nearer France.

April 30th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. Speaking of old Neptune sleeping badly and becoming restless, he must have had a nightmare last night. I was kept awake for several hours by the tossing of the ship, that was evidently endeavoring to drive me through its wall. I could not lose the motion of the ship even after I got out of bed, and soon I was far from confident that I would not be sick. In the end my imagination triumphed, and I slipped away by myself and satisfied the increasing desire of the Atlantic to know what I had in my "stomick." I hope the fish enjoyed this part of the trip more than I did. There were more diseases reported on board than I ever knew existed. Men were suffering from every ailment that has ever afflicted the body of man. They would not admit that it was only seasickness.

May 1st. S. S. Karmala at Sea. This morning has been looked forward to with longing,

everyone hoping that it would bring with it a calm sea, or that they would be accustomed to the motion of the boat and not mind its cork-like antics. But lo, the day hath dawned and I am forced to cling to the rail of my bed in order to stay on my feet. As the terrible stench of decayed food piled in heaps just outside our stateroom, together with that nauseating smell of bilgewater comes wafting through the door, I am moved to a sickening desire to overcome the distance between myself and the ship's rail in nothing flat. But I swallowed hard and by a Herculean effort warded off the attack and kept 'er down. I sought peace and quiet in the lounge, moving only when compelled to.

Anyone who has passengered across the seas knows how days like this overtake you. The first day out there is much joking about "Who will be the first one to go under?"—and the laughter carries a ringing "Haw! Haw!! Haw!!!"

As that sinking feeling just preceding an upward heave of the stomach begins moving in about the third day, any laughter that is heard is now and then a fellow trying to camouflage his real condition with a sickly "hee, hee!"

They've all been "hee, hee's" today.

A little music and a few familiar songs of home cheered me up just before bedtime. Good Lord, calm this sea!

May 2nd. S. S. Karmala at Sea. Looking at a map of the world and measuring off the miles by scale, the Atlantic ocean is a mighty large body of water. But herded in a small ship, heading for a small port, with submarines scouting everywhere after you, a little lake back home seems larger in comparison. At six o'clock this morning a submarine was reported by the British Admiralty to be two hundred miles ahead, in our path. We get into its vicinity tomorrow morning. I hope we will miss it. We established our submarine guard today. No one feels quite so sure now that we will be missed, though of course nobody shows any sign of excitement. We cross into the danger zone at midnight. Life belts and clothes cling to us all through the day and night, for the remainder of the voyage. The routine duties passed without a hitch. It was proclaimed bathday by General Cronin, and Lieutenant Heron established his reviewing stand just below the hurricane deck on the aft well, and watched 2000 nude figures pass under a stream of warm water. I don't know what would have happened if we had been torpedoed at that precise moment!

May 3rd. S. S. Karmala at Sea. Sometime during the night a soldier announced to some of his confidential friends that the ship's canteen was open. This morning the canteen steward reported the loss of $760.00 worth of stock.

Well, you can't leave things lying around loose on a transport, especially anything liquid.

The wind was up again today and many who had recovered during the calm yesterday suffered a mild relapse of seasickness. This marks the end of our first twenty-four hours within the danger zone. The night is dark, and looking out over the sea only the dim outline of a convoy vessel here and there can be made out against the skyline. Not a light is seen anywhere. Not a match struck or a cigar lighted above deck. Not a sound breaks the silence save the chug-a-chug, chug-a-chug of the ship's mighty engines. Men open and close padded doors. Every man wears his life belt continuously, and officers their revolvers. Conversation is hushed, and the spell of the war zone hovers over us. Yet this strange atmosphere is not one of worry or of fear, for two thousand faces wear smiles. We're just outwitting the submarines!

May 4th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. The ship was not rolling so badly at daybreak, and by nine o'clock had quieted down sufficiently to cause a number of our permanent stateroom guests to venture out on deck. The submarine watch stood around on every deck, gazing steadily out to sea. If Fritz gets anything over on the sly, he'll have to be pretty skillful, for we have this little mill pond covered completely, and it has

been since the first night in the danger zone. Every precaution has been taken to save every one of the 2000 lives on board, in the event of trouble. The seriousness of our situation is recognized by all, and the observance of certain precautions gives us the appearance of a jury. The finest, most cheerful spirit is evident everywhere, and the desire to land and mix it with the Hun, man to man, is keen. We would all hate to become victims of the sneaking, cowardly "dachshunds" of the sea.

May 5th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. A very welcome little bunch of "mosquitoes" joined us during the early hours of the morning. One of the most wonderful things I have ever seen is the way these destroyers cover the Atlantic, like a hare darting over the prairie. The boat never moves upward or downwaard any more, from bow to stern—just plain comfortable sailing. The danger zone is calm and peaceful, and one would never dream of the sinister underwater craft that lurks in the depths under that calm surface—waiting for a chance to send a dose of high explosive into our ship's vitals. Everything is well saturated now with the smell, the terrible sickening stench of the ship. I sleep on deck. The day has been a watchful one, but nothing of an exciting nature happened. 12:30 and all's well! Good night.

May 6th. S. S. Karmala at Sea. Now that we

are at the "boom" before our port of debarkation, anchored safely to await daylight, I am very glad it happened! About nine o'clock in the morning I was awakened by a powerful shock of the ship. I never thought of submarines, strangely enough. Then came another, and I ran out on deck to learn that off to port a depth bomb, two of them, had just sent a submarine down.

We were dining at 2:30 p. m. when our ears were blasted by a terrific explosion. The dining salon was emptied pronto. It is being laughed about the ship that the General jerked the cloth off his table without upsetting a dish. I think one plate was broken.

A little English waiter, no more than fourteen years old, showed greater coolness than our officers. He stood on the stairs and shouted as we passed him:

"Be calm, gentlemen. It's nothing."

Just as I got up on the boat deck a destroyer fired, and I saw a splash to starboard. Then the ship's officers cried "Periscope abeam!" I looked, and saw the greatest thriller yet. Before the Hun could get in his deadly work one of our mosquitoes drove straight at him—went over his periscope, dropped a depth bomb on him and—the end. The conning tower came into view, swayed dizzily, and disappeared. The enlisted men came up on deck at the alarm, very

calm. They had hardly realized what had happened until it was all over. The audacity of these Huns, coming right out in front of our port of entry into France, to nip us before we could land. Can you imagine that?

May 7th. S. S. Karmala, Liverpool. Well, we got here all right. I waked up at 8:30 and we were in a typical English fog, so thick in fact that we could not move. Just as soon as it cleared we weighed anchor and moved up into the harbor. We anchored again to wait our turn to dock. Both sides of the harbor were quite remarkable to me, for reasons I am afraid to describe here just now. But memory will keep many incidents and names that danger of the loss of this book keeps me from recording now. We docked, found that trains were not available just then, and pulled away again. At 9 p. m. we tried it again. The docking of this vessel was very new and wonderful to most of us, for over here it is not so easy to spread one dock all over half the water-front. Space is conserved by quays. We sleep on board.

May 8th. Liverpool to London. Captain Cavelle of the British Staff (a cousin of Edith Cavelle), came on board the Karmala at six a. m. and invited General Cronin to London. Such invitations include Bob and me. We went ashore at eight o'clock. At the Adelphia Hotel ten minutes later I met Mr. Jagelman of Kobe,

Japan, with whom I traveled through the Orient last year—some coincidence.

The laboring class of people are all I saw on the streets of Liverpool. They appear very coarse and poverty-stricken. We left Liverpool at 9:40 over the North Western Railroad. The ride to London was delightful. The country is thickly populated, and the farms, bordered by canals and hedges, give the entire countryside the appearance of a well-kept park. Arrived in London at 8:30 p. m., visited our Headquarters there, and stopped at the Rubens Hotel near Buckingham Palace. The appearance of the people is just as in Liverpool.

Had a nice evening at the Alhambra Theatre and also down in Paddington, where morning broke up a rare party.

May 9th. London. I came down to the Hotel Rubens with Lieutenant Maddox at 7:30. We were to have breakfast here with General Cronin at eight, but he did not call, and we went down to the dining room at nine to find him there. Said he was afraid we needed the sleep so had not called us. I wonder if he knew how right he was? We hired a taxi and visited some of the places of historic interest around London. The drive through Picadilly was very interesting. London itself seems stately and complete. It wears an inexplicable dignity that only London can claim. The great medieval buildings

ROYALTY MEETS A PRINCE OF MEN

King George V Greeting Colonel Whitman, 325th Infantry, May 11, 1918, and the King Said, "Are there any more at home like these?"

with their carvings, and the statues of England's heroes of history, all tell of a day of imperial power that the people on the streets do not reflect.

But three years of terrible war have taken toll of her young men and women. The London that lives in architecture and stone is the Great City. The London that breathes today is but the remnant. London! A colossal memorial to a glorious past!

I bumped into a gang of Canadians last night. My God, what men they are! Two of these boys have been over since the first days of the war. They enlisted somewhere out west on August 5th, 1914. They tell some great stories. It is remarkable how these men have withstood the strain of half a hundred terrific battles and hard fought raids. One of them is pitifully battle scarred. They tell me he has been recommended for the Victoria Cross on five different occasions. He wears the D. C. M., the Military Cross and the Croix de Guerre. His right leg is gone, his left arm is paralyzed, and he has a score of shrapnel wounds. Kind of a ne'er-do-well before the war. These ne'er-do-wells seem to have a way of disregarding danger!

Around the tables in the cafes these boys were as jovial and cheerful as if they had seen no semblance of war. Along with their gruesome stories of war's horrors they mingled wit and

laughter. Canada has shown the world the sturdiness of her warriors. My hat comes off to them. Hail our neighbors, with whom we live in peace without army or fortress along our borders.

Went to the Adelphia Theatre.

May 10th. London. I matched Lieutenant Maddox to see who would go to Winchester to relieve Lieutenant Heron. I lost. Was not particularly sorry to leave London, where the streets are crowded with women, every one of them wearing the face of a Mrs. Pankhurst. The class distinction maintained in England apparently has prevented the development of the middle class that we have in America. The gentle folk, I understand, are mostly athletic and neatly built, and dress gracefully. The laboring class look stiff and hard, and seem to feel that anything that covers their bodies is good enough for commonplace ruffians like themselves. These two classes never overlap. A man is born into one class and cannot marry out of it, so there is no average between the two. The people on the streets of London resemble those at an Alabama country picnic on Saturday.

I arrived in Winchester at 11:55 a. m. It is a very quaint old town. I watched the 325th practice for its parade before the King, in London tomorrow. The rest camps at Morn Hill

325th Infantry on Parade, London, May 11th, 1918. "In the tread of these men was to be heard the footfall of fate," remarked the English Press..

and Wennall Downs are well situated, overlooking the beautiful Hampshire country, and they are comfortable. Many of our men pass through here.

May 11th. Winchester. Today has not been of any great importance so far as I am concerned individually, but America scored heavily. My old Regiment paraded through London and before the King. Such reports of enthusiastic welcome as London and all England extended our boys cannot be compared with any precedent. Flowers and cigarettes were thrown in their path, and old men and women bowed before the Colonel and exclaimed, "God bless you, good master." The press of England is rife in its praise of our boys, and the future will find England resting her arm on the good right arm of Uncle Sam.

England applauded, England praised. For what? The day that Napoleon's prophecy came true. The day when the young giant of the West takes upon his shoulders the burden that England can no longer carry alone. This, great England realized and applauded, for we are great for the sake of England as well as America. We are for Humanity.

The General and Lieutenant Maddox came down from London. The 325th returned at 5:30 to 6:30—covered with glory.

CHAPTER III

Flowers of Peace—Birds of War

May 12th. Winchester. General Cronin was kind enough to have Lieutenant Maddox and me included in an invitation to visit several places of historic interest in South England. We had two automobiles, General Cronin, Colonels Whitman, Jones and Wagner made up the party. We went first to old Hersley, near Romsey. There an old Briton castle sits on the heights near the town. The ruins of the ancient moats and walls are said to be older than Rome. The castle was stormed and taken by the Romans during the conquest of England. The ruins of the Roman stronghold still stand. There is an enormous well in the center. We dropped waste, soaked in gasoline and lighted, to the bottom, and nothing but a few bones were visible. It takes eight seconds for a rock dropped from the top, to strike the bottom. Such are the ruins of the Castle of Merdon.

We visited many old cathedrals, and the walls and towers for the defense of Southampton, built in the 12th and 13th Centuries. In Winchester we visited the cathedral stormed by Cromwell in the 17th Century. The stone arches

are as delicate as cloth, so finely are they carved.

May 13th. Winchester. This morning is the first that has attempted to be ugly. The sky was clouded during the early hours and we left Winchester in gloom. However, as the day grew older and we moved on to our little port, at Southampton, the winds caught the clouds and whipped them away, and the sun smiled down on the beautiful fields of "Merry England." We landed at our port of embarkation about noon, made all arrangements for our departure and secured passes to stroll about the town.

It is a busy, bustling old place, and I believe has much prettier girls than any other part of England I have seen. The girls that are seen on the streets of English towns are, almost without exception, husky and homely. Bob Maddox and I parked ourselves in a couple of comfortable chairs in a small "pub" for about an hour. We drank with gusto, but the main attraction was the little bar maid, the sweetest thing I've seen in England. When she suggested that I might enjoy a fox-trot or one-step with her tonight, I came damn near to deserting! We had a pretty nice time and went aboard at 5 p. m. and before nightfall we were moving toward the shores of France, along with a Regiment of Australians.

May 14th. Le Havre, France. We landed at Le Havre, a very attractive French city, in the early morning. I did not know what hour we came into the harbor. I was anxious to get my feet on the soil of France, for deep down somewhere within me there is a great love for this proud nation. France is to me the heroine in the romance of all the nations of all time. This feeling was born in me years ago when I read how her noble sons had defended America in its cradle. Today I am proud that I am one of the millions who will come to save our heroine from the clutches of the villain from across the Rhine.

How hard it is now that I have seen the French people going about their daily tasks in their quiet persevering manner, to realize that I am looking upon the very people who have fed and are feeding their all upon that altar of Freedom, the Western Front. They never speak of it, and only the hundreds of widows and mothers in mourning tell the story of France's sacrifices. I cannot describe the city, but the people on the streets are a fine testimonial of a force and a spirit which the Kaiser and all his vaunted armies can never conquer.

Those Australians are corkers. Bob and I were walking down the street tonight when two of them stopped us.

"Where ya going, Yanks?" one asked us. Having no set program of our own we joined

them at dinner, with the usual liquid accompaniment. This essential attended to, we met some English Ambulance girls and made a night of it. Both Auzies seemed to like us, and believe me they made a hit with a pair of Yank "looies."

May 15th. France. This morning at nine o'clock I climbed out of bed and made ready to leave this port. Last night's party left me with a terrible head. I felt like I was a total loss to the army. My introduction to the Vin sisters, Rouge and Blanc, has been accomplished. Ouch!

I left Le Havre at eleven o'clock in a fine National closed automobile with General Cronin and Major Kountze. We traveled about 125 miles through a beautiful section of France. All of the country is thickly settled and well cultivated. There is just a small difference in elevation back from the sea, and we passed through many old French towns with their earthen walls and thatched roofs. We had a delightful luncheon at Dieppe. Arrived at Arrest in the afternoon and have established our quarters in a wonderful old Chateau built in 1575. The Madame is very friendly and kind to us. We were treated to an air raid about 10:30 p. m. It was a great sensation to hear the boom of the bombs and the answer of the anti-aircraft guns. I hope I will soon get to answer a boom or two. The war got noisy right suddenly.

May 16th. Arrest, France. When I looked out of the window on awakening this morning I jumped out of bed thinking that I had overslept. The breakfast hour was 7:30. The sun was shining brightly and the air was filled with the songs of many birds. I looked at my watch —it was 5:30 a. m. I shook it, thinking it had stopped, but it still moved. Just then Major Kountze put his face in my door and asked the time. He too thought his Ingersoll dead. However we discovered that the sun is an early riser here, and had crept up on us about 4:30 a. m.

We visited Boubert, Mons and Abbeville during the day. The ride through the valley of the Somme was very delightful. Everything so ancient and complete in appearance. We had lunch with General Wheatley and staff of the British Army in Arrest. We dined with Colonel McArthur and Colonel Hancock at Boubert. Our detachment came in from Eu at 9:45.

May 17th. Arrest, France. Getting up after the day is two and a half hours old gives a fellow the idea that he is a lazy, late sleeper, but here he merely rises at a reasonable hour—seven o'clock. With so few hours of darkness, I am in grave danger of losing more sleep than I can spare. There was nothing of importance doing all day. I had an opportunity to look about the grounds of the Chateau. The outer

buildings are all filled with Belgian refugees and farm laborers. Everything is on the medieval plan and all the servants take great pride in the family of the Chateau. There is a fine collection of old fighting weapons in the hallway. The park surrounding the Chateau is quite pretty, but of course poorly cared for since war began. Looking from the third story I can almost see where the big cannon are booming. Yet here all is peace and quiet.

May 17th. Arrest, France. I watched the manoeuvering of airplanes last night just before bedtime. Two of our planes carried signal lights, and I saw an enemy plane as it became a blazing torch and plunged toward the ground. British machine guns got him, I suppose. The boom of a distant raid kept us alive, and looking, too. The toothache bothered me greatly all day. I hiked over two miles to the 325th dentist and had it treated. There was little doing all day. At supper my tooth just about got the upper hand of me, so I went over to the 325th and propped my feet up in the window facing the city square, and while the band played and the soldiers and town populace looked on interestedly, I had the nerve extracted.

Our Brigade is badly scattered. It takes hours to get around. Stories from Abbeville, raided last night, say that many were killed by machine gun fire from the planes.

May 19th. Arrest, France. No man should keep a record of the time he takes to dress on Sunday morning. Suffice it to say that we had breakfast in time to make a tour of about five towns in which our men are billeted, and spent a couple of hours looking over our target range before noon. The drive through the country down to the range on the coast was wonderful. I spent four hours of the afternoon reading up on the overseas orders and memoranda, and studying our training course here. Everything done now is to the end that all officers and men be as efficient as possible when we cross bayonets with the Hun.

I have great confidence in our boys and once we get a goodly number of them over here, the Boche advance will be toward Berlin. The training in every branch of the service is well under way now, and the men are at it with all their hearts. They have come over here with a definite job to do, and they want to get started. We are in the hands of a British Cadre, which is another name for a skeleton brigade. They are putting us through the nearest thing to the real stuff that they have in their training kits. It is what you might call post-graduate work, or maybe you prefer it as a finishing school.

May 20th. Arrest. I have been adding "France" after the name of this town in case some of my relatives come across this book and

think that I am under arrest. It is pronounced "Array." This is the beginning of work days in France. There have been many things to do all along, but so much travel has made it pretty much of a pleasure jaunt. The weather is ideal for training, and when I get out into the fresh air every morning I can't understand why the great armies on the front don't get out and scrap a bit. Today we begin our routine at Brigade Headquarters. I am giving the men all of the infantry work again. I had to visit the dentist at Saint Belmont twice during the day because of the pain. General Wheatley and his staff had dinner with us, and Lieutenant Heron and I watched another air fight later in the evening. I saw another great torch fall from the skies. The engine made more noise than the machine guns in the air—a weird sort of moan that seemed to be its swan song. It is 2:10 a. m. and I'm going to hit the quilts.

May 21st. Arrest. So near the front and spending quiet uninteresting days. It doesn't seem possible to one used to getting all of the excitement of war from the headlines of the daily papers three thousand miles from the battle line. Yet it is possible, and today has been ample proof. Airplanes scouting for, and outwitting Mr. Fritz, buzz about all day and cannot attract any attention. We get our steel helmets and gas masks and dress up and wear

our battle line clothes around, looking like the "Old Boy" himself, but nobody thinks it strange. We make comprehensive plans for training 8,500 men, and for equipping them to meet old Fritz soon, yet we feel that we are doing little. We have come over here ready to give so much that we can't realize that all is not demanded at once. In the end we may pay all, but those back home who pity us now, do not realize that we train mentally for it, and that it is a great pleasure to serve. Today I've been happy just because I know it is all worth while.

May 22nd. Arrest. Last night there was a severe air raid very near us. The bombardment was terrific, and the night was turned into complete day for miles. Today the streets here have been filled with people who left their homes and are seeking refuge wherever they can find it. The lady of our Chateau has taken in 22 of them, among them a very prominent family, that of the Count of Boismont, the mayor of the town bombarded. There are six girls in the family, all of whom are quite pretty and speak excellent English. I have never heard of anything more daring than the conduct of these girls, who left the shelter of their chateau cellar and went out and put down the fire caused by bombs, while the raid was still going on. The poor people on the streets, with nothing in the world except what they carry in their hands,

are assuredly to be pitied. Yet every one of them bear their hardships and smile on.

May 23rd. Arrest. Aside from the daily routine of military duties there has been very little to occupy my mind. The routine is practically the same as we had at Camp Gordon. No one seems to realize the training our men have had, and are starting them over like raw recruits.

The girls who moved over last night came out and talked to us in the afternoon. They are cultured, and all quite brilliant. They seem much interested in us. They were expecting to see real wild westerners, and deplore the fact that we do not wear our campaign hats and real American uniforms. They say we look so uncomfortable and unnatural in our new overseas togs. I agree with them. Some of our headquarters people evidently wish to do us up like fashion models for Paris show-windows, instead of genuine fighting Americans for the trenches.

May 24th. Arrest. Today I have experienced what the British call a "bloomin' 'ard dye's work." We did cover time enough, eight to eleven, but to conform absolutely to the ideas of Englishmen it was necessary to stop an hour and a half for luncheon, two hours for tea, and an hour for dinner. We were given three lectures on gasses, and were carried through sufficient exercises to make the roughest recruit

familiar with the gas mask and what it is for. There was nothing tiring about it except the frequent delays occasioned by the British officer in charge going through the process of thinking. He knows his business all right, as does his N. C. O's, and when he spoke we were very willing to listen. But he sure does make a job of it when he tries to think.

At about 5:45 in the afternoon we good, rough and ready American soldiers were lined up and addressed as follows, to wit:

"You've had a hard day, I know, but you've stood up well under it. The day has been long and the drills difficult. We are going to be dismissed now, for two hours, and I can see that you are becoming very impatient for your tea." I had to laugh. But you know, that isn't such a silly idea, when you come to think of it. Anyway, we found a cafe, ordered a bottle of "Vin Blanc" and had us some "tea." In fact some of the boys got all tea-d up.

Tonight they put us through a marvelous demonstration of a cloud gas attack. We were told that it was actually poison gas. As it rolled over us one of our men removed his mask. From somewhere our British instructor appeared, shaking his finger and almost screaming,

"Put on that gas mask! Put on that mask! This gas will kill you."

The fellow began laughing.

"What are you laughing at?" he demanded.

"If it will kill me, why won't it kill YOU, you have no mask on."

And John Doughboy and all the rest of us had a good haw haw. Typically English, I'd say. He'll see it next week.

The fact that the British never become rattled, has been the saving virtue in many a critical situation. The fact that this is due to a tardy realization of the seriousness of the situation, matters not.

May 25th. Arrest. An inspection of the detachment at 9:30, and the sending of eight men to the Division liaison school, constituted all of the military duties I had to perform today. In the afternoon I enjoyed a French lesson in which I had all the teachers I could hold on my knees. The children are very eager to teach me to "Parle Francaise." I am as eager to learn, too. The Boche airmen are laying off the bombardment just now, probably due to the excellent patrol work of the Allied airmen. Our delightful refugees are becoming quite friendly and come out and talk to us frequently. They are all very bright, and are splendid entertainers. They make us go some to keep up with them in conversation. No move toward the front yet.

May 26th. Arrest. A Sunday in France dawns much as a Sunday at home. Here we are denied

the privilege of a snooze, however. I had to get out just as early as on any other day. There was nothing startling happening. Sergeant Barker, a dandy old boy, was transferred from our Headquarters to the 325th. General Cronin and Lieutenant Maddox returned from a four days' tour in the trenches. From their description I can't see just how Americans will be able to endure the waiting game. Just to wait, wait, wait, day after day, within a few hundred yards of the enemy, seems to contrast too greatly with the temperament of our soldiers. However, if it takes that to win the war I suppose we can do it.

The mademoiselle refugees aren't coming out much for some reason.

May 27th. Arrest. When I get up these fine mornings it is with reluctance that I go about the routine at Headquarters and study, study, study every book available on the art of war. It seems with the Germans again hammering away at our Allied line between Soissons and Reims, that we ought to be somewhere in the battle line, smashing back at him. We are training, training, training, in our efforts to develop a machine he cannot stop. The Germans are knocking their way toward Paris. The front is extending. Thousands of reserves of both armies are being used up to cover it. The decision will go in the end to the side that has sufficient

reserves, when the line is extended to the limit of the other's reserve strength, to deliver a heavy offensive at whatever point it desires. Then the trench warfare will go. It will be open fighting. I wish it would come.

May 28th. Arrest. Every war produces great men. It takes an age to produce a genius. Today I had the opportunity of meeting the greatest American General the war has produced so far, General John J. Pershing. He is one of the very few men who ever wore four stars. I thought I had been clipped on the head when his car drove up, I saw such an array of white stars in a red field. He made only a hurried inspection of the Brigade. He is a finely built, athletic man, very graceful, and has a real click in his salute. A grey mustache, neatly cropped, above a sloping mouth, supported by an undershot jaw of the bulldog type gives him quite a distinguished appearance. Whether he is as big as the job given him remains for the future to prove, but destiny certainly paved his way to glory when he was given command of all our forces in France.

May 29th. Arrest. It is impossible to travel in France beyond the view of a little peasant town. I have been all day on the road from one Battalion of our Brigade to another, but never ple do not live scattered about over their farms. more than two miles from a town. The peo-

They prefer small villages to live in, and to waste two hours each morning going out to their farms.

Our men are coming along with their training in remarkable fashion. General Cronin has been compelled to take the instruction of our target practice out of the hands of the British because of their absolute ignorance of the principles necessary to the development of what we consider effective rifle fire. We are so far in advance of what they expect of us that they hardly know how to proceed. We certainly can't show them how to start, for we look with childish wonder to the heroes of four years of war, to point out the most approved methods for killing the Hun. But they do not realize that we have already had months and months of training, that is all.

May 30th. Arrest. Today has been a pretty one, and a busy one. I covered most of the units of our Brigade on my inspection tour. Our men are rounding into shape wonderfully. There is something about these English that enables them to make rapid progress without the appearance of more than ordinary effort. I have thought of the many sour things we have said—I have said—about the English, and the cutting things they have remarked about us, and I wonder why?

We are closely related by blood, commercial

interests and language. We have had our quarrels and settled them years ago—our forefathers did that for us. We are Allies today. Nearly four long years of struggle has thinned her army and stripped the ranks of her civilian population. England has her boys in their 'teens, and her men beyond forty up here now, worn and weary of war, but holding steadfastly to the line. I am glad we are at last coming in with fresh troops, the flower of our manhood, to take up the battle alongside of them. We should not forget the fight they've made, and are making now. The strong heart of England will triumph!

May 31st. Arrest. Friday was ushered in by Reveille, and we pitched into this war business again. The same daily routine brought no excitement. I went over to Saint Valery Sur Somme with some of my old 325th friends and we ferreted out a cafe where we dined well, drank exceedingly well and entertained ourselves generally. The business in hand is too much in earnest to do much carousing, but now and then I think it helps to break over the traces, to "kick it over." Anyway, I did tonight, and conscience doesn't bother me in the slightest. I am getting so I can harmonize on every verse of the battle hymn of the A. E. F.—

"Oh, the Mademoiselle from Armentieres,
parlez vous,
The Mademoiselle from Armentieres, parlez vous,
The Mademoiselle from Armentieres,
She hasn't been kissed in fifty years,
Hinky dinky parlez vous—"

And so on, ad infinitum, louder and funnier. Good night, I'm off to watch the pink elephants and what have you.

June 1st. Arrest. Here we do not hold to the long and tedious program of inspection that we had in America. The men are interested themselves, and require very little verification of routine work. We put in the morning in training, just as we do every day in the week, and gave the men the afternoon off. It has been a fine clear day, and it was hard to keep inside working over small scale maps.

German airplanes bombarded several towns along the river last night searching for ammunition dumps, but did not locate any. They also bombarded Paris and other cities today and yesterday, after the British and Allies had consented not to drop a bomb in Germany during the day. Faith pledged by those people means nothing, and they believe we will make peace on their terms and promises? Hardly!

June 2nd. Arrest. Every day it becomes more difficult to associate these days of spring-

time, sunshine and flowers with the great world tragedy so near us. These quiet unflinching people within hearing of the great guns on the battle front, and threatened with destruction by the Huns' airplanes at night, go to church on Sunday to petition God for victory and peace, then return to their homes confident that in the ultimate decision His justice will fall on the enemy that threatens to destroy them.

I saw them today, leaving their homes to assemble at the church. They say little about the war—just mourn silently for the tens of thousands that have been taken from them. I cannot record the feelings I have on days like this among such people, such wonderful people, so near the battle, yet living in perfect peace. Our folks at home know nothing of the horrors of war in comparison.

June 3rd. Arrest. The days are calling for long hours of hard work from our boys just now, and they are giving their very best. With British officers coming out of the recent big offensive present with every unit, they are getting the benefit of first hand experience. Physically they are far superior to the soldiers of our Allies, for they are our select men. Our officers are attending various schools and the N. C. O.'s are practically running the companies, and doing it well. Today the long delayed German offensive which broke through between Sois-

sons and Reims is slowing down. They seem to have scored an initial success, due, it is claimed, to the secrecy with which they managed to screen the concentration of their reserves on this front. Our routine at Headquarters has been of little moment to me in this center of great development and action. I am on the Adjutant's job again.

June 4th. Arrest. Today has been the same as yesterday to me. The sun has been out just as brightly. The Madame's wonderful bed of various colored pansies have nodded their heads just as proudly and all nature has cried just as loudly—"There is no War." Yet that rush of troops from one training area to another, the buzz of airplanes overhead, the cracking of machine guns and rifles at target practice, the distant rumble of cannon at the front—all remind us that nature alone is tranquil and that the great storm of human conflict, the great clash of right and wrong, is all about us, and pansies just as gay as those in our garden, nod above the graves of its victims. Yes, nature is peaceful, but passing about her, wrecking the very face of her, are grim, determined men, fighting. Fighting on the one side for world empire, on the other for Freedom and lasting Peace.

June 5th. Arrest. The routine work at Headquarters is becoming more and more intense.

Liaison, the iron band that holds the fighting unit together as a powerful instrument with which the Commander may deal a successful blow, is receiving more and more attention. The duties of staff officers have been assigned, and books on instruction prescribed for study. I am now in charge of the operations section of Brigade Headquarters, which covers the tactical records of the Brigade. Within the advanced zone we are all exerting every effort to become the soldiers who are to humble the proud autocrats of Prussia. With all of the serious study of the art of war, however, I found time to enjoy a conversation with our delightful refugees—the daughters of the Count of Boismont. War is a terrible thing—but it has its compensations.

June 6th. Arrest. The further I go into this delightful month of June, in this land of sunshine, wonderful blue skies and brilliant flowers, with its early spring climate, the more interesting and instructive it promises to be. To relieve the monotony of the everyday details of routine, comes the order that I am to go to the front,—that mysterious boundary we know as the Frontier of Freedom, where the forces of good and evil are clinched in the desperate struggle for the domination of the world. Tomorrow I go to experience the life that one lives who fights for the cause of Humanity. Since I

was but a little boy, I have lived and felt that thrill of "tomorrow," and all that it might bring forth. Tonight another "tomorrow" is holding the thrill of thrills for me. It is wonderful to contemplate.

June 7th. The Front. Three times before I have been ordered to the front to be disappointed when the time came to go, by the cancellation of my orders. But this time I was not disappointed. I left in the early morning and in the afternoon the heavy artillery was belching all around me. Being unused to the routine at the front, I could not know that I had arrived on a quiet day. I did not know that every deafening explosion near me sent a giant shell into the trenches of the Hun, so I spent my first hours jumping and ducking shells that never arrived.

The projectiles sound like express trains rushing through the air. Those fired by the British guns gradually die away in the distance. Those fired by the Hun batteries screech nearer and nearer, until they crash in our area. Forty-five of us went into the front line to live the life of the Tommies in Picardy.

June 8th. British Front. Having carefully inquired into the peculiarities of the Commanding General (Kennedy), to whose Headquarters I was assigned, I found that he has one meal a day all alone, his breakfast. I was out of bed at 8 o'clock and cleared out of the dining room

(a dugout twenty feet underground) before the General came in. I spent two hours with the Brigade Major, Gibbs of the Coldstream Guards, in the front lines. We were shelled a little, but the chances of getting hit seemed slight.

The London Rifles are holding this sector. The boys up front are cheerful, yes, but look very tired and weary. The trenches show that the men who constructed them no longer work to perfect their defences. They know they are outnumbered and seem to feel that they cannot stop the Hun in a good trench any better than in a poor one. I can see the effects of four long years in the trenches on these men. The desire and determination to do is still in them, but the energy is gone.

June 9th. British Front. I spent the greater part of the day in the office of the Brigade Major. I examined all of his operation orders and defense schemes. The living apartments are twenty feet underground. The dugout is like a real house, rooms are partitioned off and a hallway runs down between them. The mess is quite formal. General Kennedy requires his staff to dress for dinner. The courses are accompanied by the appropriate cocktails, wines and liquors. After dinner the phonograph is brought out and all enjoy a few sentimental records. The discipline I do not consider the best. The men walk at leisure above ground over parts the en-

emy certainly can observe easily and this discloses the location of all important points. The trenches are all undercut badly and will be uncomfortable in bad weather.

The Australian General commanding the adjoining sector came over today to borrow some English uniform caps. When asked why he wanted them he answered very matter-of-fact:

"You see, I am going to send some of our boys over to get a few prisoners tonight. You know, when Jerry sees those cocked hats of ours, he'll run, and we'll miss him. He's not afraid of your boys. I want to fool him with your caps."

That's one for the book! And he even got the caps.

The Germans have no trenches here, that is a regular trench system. He has echoloned small slit trenches, good against artillery.

CHAPTER IV.

The Frontier of Freedom.

June 10th. British Front.

So this is the Frontier of Freedom,
The Hun's but a few yards away
On the opposite slope of the spur there,
Dug in under the clay.
The lightning expresses are whistling,
Wee small ones 'most up to a ton;
From the Howitzers back of the ridges,
Plunking away at the Hun.
There's no one astir in the front lines—
Just a guide staff man and myself;
The guard is enjoying a siesta,
Curled double upon a trench shelf.
There's a niche full of bombs by him handy,
And a Lewis gun propped up alone.
There's a periscope left sticking upright,
By the side of a vacant 'phone,
The support and reserves as indifferent,
Are tucked away back in the rear.
When the big heavy Hun shells are bursting
Probably less than ten of them hear.
The machine guns are hidden in flower beds,

That blossomed in the warm suns of May,
They're filled with thousands of death
shells
To spit in the Germans' pathway.
The defense of the Frontier of Freedom
Has been wonderful, yes, up to date,
But a look at it now is to realize
That America was almost too late.

There has been a bit of gas shelling, and shrapnel falls all day. Captain Williams of Georgia, one of our party, was killed last night. He went out with a party of Britishers to string some wire, and the machine guns got him. He was a professor at the University of Georgia, and came from Athens. He was a much loved officer of the 326th Infantry. I'm sorry.

June 11th. British Front. Last night the Australians on our right made an advance on their entire Division front. I never saw anything at any time so wonderful as those rolling hills of Picardy, as the flashes of artillery swept along their slopes. The evening was clear, though night was near enough to contrast the red flashes with the cannons. The air was filled with a thunder that never ceased, yet there was no terror in its roar. No one could see any destruction that the cannonade was causing, for the view of the enemy lines was cut off by high ground in front of us. It was difficult to believe that this wonderful demonstration was not

staged for an admiring audience, instead of dealing out death and destruction. I returned to Arrest in the afternoon. It was a very interesting trip. I passed through the ruined, or rather deserted city of Amiens, and will describe a part of it tomorrow.

June 12th. Arrest. This is gradually transforming from a diary to a continued story. Nothing much has been doing today save the routine duties that I have recounted day after day. I want to record my impressions of Amiens. I have looked over many deserted fields in France and deserted homes the world over, almost. But none of them ever chilled me like this once beautiful city, which a month and twenty days ago was busy and mirthful. Now it is absolutely deserted; its buildings caved in by giant shells, and its telephone and trolley wires broken and hanging down above the streets. The houses, some of them with the furniture still in place, covered with the dust of the streets, look like empty shells of former living things. We Americans speak of a dull town where there is no fast life, as dead. Amiens looks as though the vital spark of life has gone forever, its very soul passed into oblivion. The quiet of the graveyard is wrapped about this little city, so recently a center of laughter and gaiety.

June 13th. Arrest. Just the usual thing for a

starter in the morning now. I have become by this time to be less of a novelty to the young French girls who are staying at our Chateau, and am really becoming a friend. They are lively, and not at all bashful, so I do not object to their frequent visits to this side of the lawn. The General surprised and terminated a nice parlor party this afternoon.

Today our entire Division has had its spirits rescued from the uttermost bottom of the dumps by an order transferring us somewhere. No information was given out relative to our destination. We do not need that—a move of any kind is always welcomed by our soldiers. They have been woefully afraid of having to recruit the British Army, though of course no such preposterous procedure has ever been contemplated, at least by our Command. True, some of the officers of the Allied troops have gone so far as to suggest that our soldiers might be used to fill their gaps, afraid possibly that we were not sufficiently well trained, or efficiently officered to stand on our own feet as complete American units. We are fond of "Tommy Atkins" all right, but we want to be a part of an American corps.

June 14th. Arrest. When big fish come striking through the pond, the little fellows scatter. So have the big things of the day driven out our petty routine troubles. I have been over a map

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

French Kiddies Wondering What Les Americaines Would Do to the Boche.

most all day, tracing, figuring and drafting a march order and table for the organizations our Brigade Commander will have charge of. I did not know that so many technicalities destined to create innumerable complications could be present in the preparation of a very simple march order and march table. Anybody who may believe a simple thing simple, may exchange their complex problems for the simple ones that fall to my lot, without anything to boot for the trade. Everything is set however, and the faint toot of a penny whistle will soon set several thousand men in motion. It really is a great life if you don't weaken before the penny whistle blows.

June 15th. Arrest. I cannot say that I have enjoyed this last day in Arrest among my first friends made in France, for I really regret the parting that will come tomorrow. My refugees, the family of the Count of Boismont, have been very kind, and the girls are so much like our own jewels back home that I feel the least bit sorry that my parting with them will be forever. I will not see them again, and to each other we shall be but very pleasant and sympathetic shadows fallen across the path of life, to vanish ere our acquaintance could develop into lasting friendship. Such delightful emotions come to the young at that age when they are in love with Romance, and every girl or every boy who

is normal, reveals these emotions. Naturally the first American officer meeting his first young French girls enjoyed the experiment that was novel to both. So good-bye, little girls, I shall think of you many times, and sometimes, perhaps, you may think of me.

June 16th. En Route to Somewhere. As usual we were hauled out of bed at 4:30 a. m. to await transportation that arrived at 8:30. Leaving so early, I did not expect to see the little girl friend I told good-bye last night, but she got up with the sun and I did not object in the least to the tardiness of the car. These peculiar customs get me—I have never been introduced to her and can't get introduced properly because we have no friends in common, yet we were, I may say, excellent friends.

We loaded for "somewhere" in France at 10 o'clock. The cars in which the enlisted men were crowded were labelled "Horses 8 to 10 Men 36 to 40," and were immediately christened French side-door Pullmans. We were crowded into a wee bit of a compartment without room to turn. Lieutenant Maddox and I climbed out on a flat car for more air and more room. We circled Paris in the afternoon and the people hung over every bridge above the railroad to throw flowers down on us. We could see the Eiffel Tower, and one time looked upon the distant housetops of Gay Paree, but we

passed on into the night for somewhere ahead. I'm going back to Paris some time when this war is over, and see what makes it go 'round.

June 17th. En Route. Well, sleep is not everything anyway. Last night at 12:30 I gave up hope of getting a sleep on the fourteen square inches allotted me in the compartment of the passenger car. When the General stretched out the full length of one of the seats intended for four, and announced that he and I would take turns at sleeping, I decided right then and there that my turn would never come. I eased out and climbed up on a flat car at the first stop, and found an ammunition wagon full of blanket rolls. I strapped myself to a wheel and spent the night there.

At every point I was disturbed by merciful Red Cross girls trying to pour a gallon of coffee into me. Daylight failed to spring any surprise on me, for I was right there and saw it coming. The day has been some better. We have had a bit of wine out on our flat car, which has become quite popular now, and songs mix well with it. France is beautifully wooded in the section we have traveled all day. The hills and valleys are sharply cut and the air is very chilly. Rumor says that we get "there" tonight.

June 18th. Gondreville. I am sure that I am not the only man who is delighted that our ex-

tended tour of France is over. Last night I settled comfortably—yes, comfortably—on the floor in the short aisle in our car. One of the cushions from the seat softened the boards considerably. I had not rapped at the gates of dreamland when we were informed that we were in Toul and that the privilege of unloading was ours. Great Caesar, we had damn near crossed France! I was designated as the victim slated to unload and march the detachment to our rest camp at Gondreville. I had them in shape by 3:30 a. m. when the General, true to his mania for keeping people upset, decided I should ride out in the car with him, come back and march out a second time with the men. All the while the helpless enlisted men stood and waited. I arrived in Gondreville on my second voyage at 7:30 a. m. and after running counter to half a dozen sore-headed captains, billeted my men. I spent the rest of the day cleaning up billets.

June 19th. Gondreville. General Cronin seemed to think my proclamation that today would be clean-up day entirely out of place, but just the same he let it go. A two-day and two-night trip in horse cars, with manure and straw for a bunk, makes a fellow appreciate a bath and a little rest, even if he is only a soldier. Gondreville has never taken any medals for sanitation I am reasonably sure, for the effects of any past cleanings up are totally out of evi-

dence. It is on the river Moselle, on a rolling plateau that overlooks all the country round, and from the walls of our Chateau we can see the country where the two great armies are locked in death grips. The streets are paved with rough cobble stones and the houses are old stone. The town was evidently completed years ago, and any idea of improvement or cleaning has failed to become of age since that time. The people, however, are very courteous and polite, and quite willing to make us at home. The soul of a people may redeem the pits of hell.

June 20th. Gondreville. Another program of training has been instituted. Other schools have been started. The Germans begin a great offensive, and we retaliate by starting another school. The new program brought me out of bed at 6 o'clock. I have been given absolute command of the Headquarters Detachment. How long this will last I do not know. That depends on how long it takes General Cronin to decide he wants a change. I placed charges against the Sergeant-Major today but true to form, the General protected him and the effort was wasted. Some of the Regular Army seem to feel that the war has produced a great American Army for their special privilege, and that the hair of its most humble private must be ex-

empt from the processes of law designed to enforce discipline.

I visited Toul from 6 until 10 p. m. Our soldiers are everywhere in the streets, and I felt very much at home. Europe is not America, and to see our uniforms is comforting.

June 21st. Gondreville. There is an airport adjoining our training area, and our boys are stunting all day. Every so often we see them set out on serious business across the lines.

I was with a gang of aviators, artillerymen and infantry officers last night. It's remarkable the esprit de corps that has been built up in our army. Every man believes his particular branch of service, and for that matter his own particular unit, the most effective factor in the war. This brought about a hot argument. There was a crippled aviator and a maimed lieutenant of infantry who came near to blows discussing the relative quantity of guts necessary to sustain a man in the flying corps and the infantry.

Foolish talk! It does take courage of the finest sort to forsake terra firma for the skies and sail into enemy territory, there to brave the anti-aircraft and the possibility of massed attack by enemy planes. It takes nerve that is unfailing to face attack or to give battle in the skies, when a man might turn and tail it for home, and no one be the wiser.

Our aviators are of our best youth, and American youth has the guts!

But us old mud splashers in the infantry have our moments too. To stick it day in and day out under the range of enemy artillery, machine guns and rifles, subject to his gas attacks and the bombs of his aviators. It takes guts to go into his wire, to march forward in the face of withering machine fire, grenades and rifles and take position after position from him.

Let's not argue, boys. Let's divide the honors and pitch some bouquets to every other arm of the service while we are doing it.

June 22nd. Gondreville. The very chilly summer time continues. To be removed from the tropics where I never knew winter, to this land where real summer weather is unknown, upsets a fellow just a little. But France and her flower are just as fair, yes, even fairer than anything I saw in the Orient.

I spent this morning shopping in Toul. It is a very old town and famous for the very great military advantages nature has given it. Its valleys are narrow and constitute the Eastern gateway to France, but the sharp, cliff-like mountains that border them practically close the gate to the enemy. I went with General Cronin into the American sector held by the 51st Brigade in the afternoon, and there met General Peter E. Traub, who hiked the hills

of Mindanao with me so often in 1916. The world is small, it seems. Toul was very much alive when we came through on our return, and the nurses on the streets lead one to believe it a pleasant place.

June 23rd. Gondreville. The sun came out brightly this morning, a thing we have come to regard as unusual in this section. At midday however the sun gave place to stormy clouds and for a few minutes we had an abundance of wind and rain. Then, as suddenly as they had come, the clouds vanished and France was sunshine again. In these mountain districts the weather is very uncertain.

Everybody went to Toul in the afternoon except me. I was entertained by the old gentleman of the Chateau, who came in and sang the Marseillaise with all the fire of a patriot of '70-'71. He is a queer old duck, with a white mustache and goatee. When dressed in loose black smock and wearing his little black turban-like cap, he has all the markings of a hermit. He has been closed in for so long that young people from a far-off foreign land interest him very much. He is a fine old man.

June 24th. Gondreville. Today the first units of our Division started for the front. In a few days we will be at that line where every advance is made in blood. We will be holding back the hordes of Germany. As the wagon

train winded its way out of the village and disappeared down the road, the soldiers watching realized for the first time that they were destined to go into the line within a few days. Every one of them smiled and looked proud and pleased at the thought. I will also be glad when we move, provided General Cronin will forget a little of his petty vanity and childishness, and let his mind travel some channel other than that dredged by his own greatness and importance. He is one of the most intelligent men I have ever known, and the most pleasant at times, to be so conceited and so convinced of his own infallibility. Maybe when he realizes that in the trenches he is dependent on his men, he will change.

June 25th. Gondreville. When a fellow has no more to show for a tiresome day's work than I have to record tonight, it is a difficult matter to cover a page. Nevertheless the routine drills in every subject, from "left face" to the construction of maps, that have fallen to my lot today have given me plenty to do. Everybody went to the front to look over our future home, and left me as housekeeper for the Brigade. I spent the entire afternoon building sections of maps on increased and decreased scales. In the evening when the General came in I strolled down town to meet our French interpreter. I went up to his billet and we killed an excellent

bottle of "Barsac." He is a peculiar bird. Only the fact that he suffered severely from shell shock at one time excuses his incessant chatter. It is always a wail about his troubles, and I find it hard to switch the subject to ladies and more pleasant topics.

June 26th. Gondreville. If I knew the sex of the days I could refer to this almost as a twin sister or brother of yesterday. Lieutenant Maddox does not find it hard to locate a button or two to be returned to the Division Quartermaster, and takes his departure early. The Major has to discuss improved fly-traps with the Division staff and the General must needs look after everything, so between them they manage to honor me with the job of door keep to the proverbial bag.

I did some map drawing in the afternoon and got out a march order for Headquarters,—the one that takes us to the front lines. Now if the airplanes which the Huns have over us will put off their bombardment a few minutes I'll get this over with. They are as thick as bumble bees over here tonight, and there's a great deal of thunder from the Archies. The Boche are welcoming their guests. Towns are being shelled that have been left quiet for four years. They evidently want to scare us.

June 27th. Gondreville. To get up early in the morning expecting to hike twenty miles

with a small detachment, and then discover that it is all wrong, that you will ride up in the General's automobile and another guy will do the pedestrian stunt, is a thing to heighten the spirits of any man. We opened our office at Minorville, a small village just back of the lines, at 4 p. m. today and started doing business as a front line Brigade. We are at last at the coveted goal—The Front. Now for Berlin. It isn't very exciting here. Minor patrolling and artillery constitutes the total of our activity. Yet to have the Boche just over the wire from us is exhilarating indeed, though our Divisional big guns would add a great deal to our pleasure. They haven't joined us yet, but will soon be booming in back of us. The relief was accomplished without a casualty, which is a splendid beginning. It is too bad the war cannot be won the same way, but we are now at the precipice. A step forward—and the battle is on.

June 28th. Minorville. It is a long way from Camp Gordon, where we used to gouge fagots with our bayonets and advise our men to "see red" and growl, and imagine that every thrust sent his bayonet to the Kaiser's heart, to the front lines in Lorraine where every gun is kept loaded and every bayonet keen for Fritzie's liver over in the next row of trenches ahead. After months of training and weeks of travel, we've made the route and are holding our share

of the Frontier. Our men have had excellent training and are courageous, but we are yet to become veterans. We are in a semi-quiet sector. We are playing a pre-season practice game. I know that many, many wild ideas of the "Great War," built upon the headlines of newspapers, and colored stories told by men "who were there," have been blasted today. After all it is a very commonplace thing to do.

June 29th. Minorville. After getting up early and putting the detachment through morning drill, and going through an afternoon of tedious staff details, I wandered off my beat. This is the reserve position of the 326th, and I dropped in to a billet where six or seven of its officers were keeping a date with the "Vin" sisters "Blanc" and "Rouge." I joined the party. It was a success from every angle. Lieutenant Pringle, half shot, is a scream. In the poker game which inevitably develops these nights, Lady Luck smiled down on her little Georgia looie. It's a great war, sometimes. I won a pocketful of Francs.

June 30th. Minorville. If I did not have to keep getting up for Reveille every morning I would stop saying anything about it. The bout I had last night left me in no merry mood for this morning. A night like that lasts me for quite a spell.

Setting up exercises with the detachment and

four hours good heavy drill cleared my head, and I finished the day in fine fettle. Tonight I am shunning anything that looks like a party. Can't risk getting out of physical trim. Too much at stake.

July 1st. Minorville. When I get up feeling as fit as I did this morning and contrast it with yesterday, I almost become a prohibitionist. Almost but not quite.

What the hell, say we all. When is the war going to start for us? I used to swell up like a pouter pigeon when I thought about being with a front line outfit, but it has been as peaceful here as grandma's sewing circle since we arrived. An airplane now and then, or a distant piece of artillery, is about all the war we get. Yet dark headlines back home probably have our folks worrying sick about us. It will change though. Let it come—we're all sick of this practicing.

July 2nd. Minorville. Since coming into the line I had my first opportunity to go up to the front line trenches today. I went up in the morning to inspect the sector occupied by the 325th Infantry—my old Regiment. My old Battalion being in the front line, made me doubly keen to go. I found Regimental Headquarters hostile as hell, so spent very little time with them. Captain Patton, the Adjutant, is a perpetual gripe anyway, but I didn't blame them

much. They were sore at some of the orders that had come down from Brigade Headquarters, but I didn't issue them, so why take it out on me?

I had lunch with Major Hawkins and spent the whole afternoon at the front. I went through the observation posts and front line trenches with Lieutenant Bettes. The trenches are very old. They look more like country lanes than fighting positions. Everything is very quiet. I went out even into No-Man's-Land, and through the position shown on the maps as "Regnieville," but there are only heaps of brick and mortar to mark the village site. Roses that used to ornament some fair maiden's front yard are blooming out there, but their beauty is the severest irony. The contrast between nature's work and man's work is sharply drawn.

July 3rd. Minorville. Today has been very quiet. Nothing has happened back as far as Brigade Headquarters. A very sad accident occurred this morning, shortly after midnight. Lieutenant Anderson, one of the best loved officers in the 325th, was killed by one of his own men.

His platoon had taken over an outpost position. The men were nervous. Anderson was making his round of inspection. As he came around a traverse in the trench, one of his men

commanded him to halt, and simultaneously with his command, the sentry tripped and fell. The Corporal next to him, hearing the command to halt, whirled around and saw his comrade on the ground, and just beyond him a man standing. Thinking him a German, the Corporal fired and killed Anderson. It all happened so fast that no one can be blamed. The night was very dark.

Anderson and I became warm friends while I was in the Company with him at Camp Gordon. I hate to hear of a fine brave man going West without having a chance to make the Hun pay. If he can sell himself dearly, every man who wears the American uniform will die smiling, but it is hard to go by accident. Before the great army of American citizen soldiers that has come to France, crosses the Atlantic again, Belgium will belong to the Belgians, France to the French, and Liberty will be the heritage of all the people. My friend is gone, but for such a cause!

July 4th. Minorville. Today the world celebrates the greatest national holiday in history. Every American citizen should return thanks to Heaven for the privilege of his citizenship. Every Allied nation and almost all of South America joins us in celebrating this day of our independence. The principles upon which the policy of our government and the character of

our people are founded will be extolled by every leading nation of the Allied and neutral world. To guarantee the future privilege of the freedom and liberty that our government assures to all peoples, the Allied nations today again pledge themselves to the successful prosecution of the war. As indicative of the tremendous part we are playing, 120 ships will slide into the water from American shipyards, and the President announced that we have today more than a million men in France. To us who are holding the Hun on the Western Front, our thoughts go out to America, and to our homes today.

July 5th. Minorville. I spent the entire forenoon yesterday at the front on the 326th sector. It was a fine day and I enjoyed the tour. The trenches there, just as on the 325th front, are so old and badly washed out that a fellow feels like he is strolling down a country lane, instead of a trench calculated to stop the charge of the Boches. I must say they contrast the concrete trenches which patrols have reported behind the German outposts. I went to Menil le Tour in the Dodge, and made a whirlwind trip to Manonville and Domevre. The best wines are to be had at the last two places named, and wine always sharpens the General's wit and makes our meals more delightful. There is a blonde at Manonville who deserves an hour every day too. The purchase of wine is a very serious com-

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

They See in These Doughboys the Promise of Victory.

mission in France, for a fellow who isn't familiar with the choice brands is likely to be suspected of being a rough "peasant," too familiar with the taste of water.

July 6th. Minorville.

When No Letter Comes from Home

I wonder why, when the mail came in, there was no letter for me?
All of the boys had letters from home, most of them two or three.
They were so happy, so full of fun, just like they were home again.
But I am not happy, I am not glad, my heart is full of pain;
My kindred and friends are all over there, in the west where the sun has gone,
I wonder if something has happened to them, for I feel alone, alone!
They wouldn't forget me—no, not forget, they know I'm anxious to hear,
If only the line "All is well" had come, I would not have this fear.
But nothing, no word at all from home. Her letter is missing too.
It's easy fighting Jerry, nobody minds. But tonight what am I to do?
Let him shower his shells like hail, send over his gas like fog,

Send every devilish invention he's got!! I'm not
afraid of the dog!
Out of the worst hell he can prepare, surely
and safely I'll come—
With light heart and laughter—yes, happily,
If I can only get letters from home!

July 7th. Minorville. The Sabbath day may not be remembered by the Hun, but he keeps it "holey." His shells and ours were screeching through the air all day. We were startled about 10 o'clock this morning by a sudden and furious outburst of music. The 326th band came over and gave us a concert. They played the same old tunes we used to dance to in America and I don't think I was the only homesick man around. The last piece they played was "Dixie." Our French interpreter looked at me and exclaimed, "Ah, that's English." I came near to doing him bodily injury. The Chaplain of the 326th held short services. He has splendid ideas for collecting a large congregation—gets the band out and has them play a fine assortment of jazz and waltzes. The poor little Y. M. C. A. girl was overburdened with attention. A whole Battalion was paying homage to her.

July 8th. Minorville. Aside from frequent artillery action on various sub-sectors time passes very quietly. Some of our units in the front line succeed in fighting hot skirmishes

with our own patrols. Some of these, when no casualties result, would be amusing if the situation was less serious. When the nervous tension of the first few days of front line experience wears off, this condition will, of course, disappear. Becoming acquainted with the sector is difficult because of the few opportunities we have to go up into the front line. Map study is the source of most of the information obtained by the staff. With the Command still with the French, this is not so important, and I am hopeful of going for extended tours with the front line units. The days of waiting in these little deserted farm settlements are tiring, especially with an impatient General to harass us eternally.

Our army learns fast. Some of the more important details of French may have escaped it, but from the cafe down the street comes the song I think it has learned to a man. Just a little chantey to the Mademoiselle:

"Bon soir ma cherie
Comme et al est vous.
Bon soir ma cherie,
Je vous aime beaucoup.
Avez vous une fiance?
Sans me faire rien,
Voulez vous promenade avec moi ce soir?
'Oui! Oui.' Tres bien."

They substituted a more intimate inquiry, but it would hardly do for my diary.

July 9th. Minorville. There has been great joy spread through Headquarters by the announcement that our bold and dashing signal officer Lieutenant Hood, will have a young American girl to dine with us this evening. Being the "Mayor Domo" of the General's mess I set about to make the occasion sufficiently pleasing to make another visit in the future possible. I startled the table by producing four quarts of what the cook christened "good old U. S. ice cream," but I am afraid since the fair maid has come, dined and departed, that I wasted a great deal of energy.

General Pasaga called in the afternoon. He is a very keen old boy apparently. Domerve, Manonville and Menil-le-Tour were all visited in the day's rambling. In the evening about 9 o'clock the German's shelling hit some of our positions to the west heavily. Let him boom away. It gives the war a military setting. I wish he'd parade his infantry—we'd accelerate his goose-step for him.

July 10th. Minorville. A fairly heavy rain last night settled about half of the mobile soil of France. The dust has been very bad during the long drouth and the little sprinkling from heaven was timely. It also improves the outlook for the crops. Today General Cronin took

over the command of this sector. He now commands his Brigade and two regiments of French. Our Division will take over about ten miles of front and relieve the 154th French Infantry, which will be available for service elsewhere. Colonel Charpentier and his staff came over, and in their usual polite fashion relinquished the command to "Les Americaines." I was at the 326th Headquarters in the morning, otherwise it was a pretty slow day, working over maps and liaison schemes. I am glad General Cronin has taken the sector, for there are few men who I believe to be his superior as a soldier. The German General who has to parry his tactics will not find him one of those "Laughable American Generals."

July 11th. Minorville. It is easy to be happy and content when you are feeling fit and have enough work to keep the General's little fits off your nerves, but when trench fever gets into your bones and there is too much time left on your hands to be taken up by constant reproaches from him, who delights in styling himself the "Big Boy," life is not so merry. I had taken my fourth calomel tablet when I was ordered up for a night inspection of the 326th Infantry, first line Battalion. I went up with Lieutenant Rodewald, and enjoyed the trip as much as if I had been a well man. I lost my lunch on the parapet, but that is just as good a place to lose

it as any. I found things quiet and the men in good spirits and alert. They are wishing for something to happen. Some of our cannon were pounding the Hun while I was up front, in retaliation for a bunch of gas he had put over just before I arrived. Returned to Headquarters at 2:30 a. m. I hope the calomel will get me straightened out, for I can't be very energetic feeling so punk.

July 12th. Minorville. A dose of Mr. Epsom's famous preparation is not conducive to immediate joyfulness, but between the calomel and the salts I got straightened out and feel more like fighting today. Since my own daily story would be a sorrowful one without a little variation, I am going to recount a humorous incident. This morning bright and early a Corporal and nine privates appeared before the Commanding Officer of the 326th front line Battalion and stated that they had reported for active duty. It developed that they belong to the heavy artillery. They complained bitterly because they had come all the way to France to fight and had been kept miles back of the front since landing, keeping two big guns greased and shined up, but had not been permitted to fire them. The Corporal, when informed that he would have to be put in the guardhouse and sent back to his Battery, said: "It is hard to come three thousand miles to fight, and then be kept back. I've

asked several times to be transferred to front line infantry, but they stopped me, so I thought maybe if I brought nine men along, you'd let us raid the Hun for you tonight." Suppose Kaiser Bill should hear that? These Yanks are actually looking for trouble.

July 13th. Minorville. Thanks to the doctor's treatment I came out of bed a fairly well man this morning. I have made two reports today to which I attached a couple of the Major's unnecessary sketches. I think the entire Division has gone absolutely map mad. Every officer is being chased from the important matters of actual distribution of troops and reconnaissance of ground, to make sketches ofthings he knows and cares nothing about. And after all the diverted energy has been spent there is not one single coherent map anywhere. There are fragments, yes; there are millions of fragments, and they continue to come in. The General, after keeping me in the trenches all night and up all the next day while I was really sick, discovered that I was not well enough to take my turn into Toul this afternoon. We had a very good movie show at the Y. M. C. A. tonight. The music that the pianist rendered was good, yes, very pretty indeed, but it made me think a little too much of home.

July 14th. Minorville. This is France's 4th of July, the birthday of the French Republic.

Although our hearts are in sympathy with the people of France, and in spirit join them in celebration of their "Liberty Day," we have not been able to demonstrate our feeling except in a very minor degree. We cannot stop long while holding the front line. In the afternoon we had the Mayor of the town and the Staff Charpentier at our Headquarters and a bit of champagne served as an excuse for toasts to France and the tie of friendship that binds us all together as warriors for Justice. Even the Y. M. C. A. rose to the occasion and sipped a glass of champagne. I was out until 3 a. m. straightening out the reliefs that became mixed up on our left. It seems difficult to get our people to read and execute the same order the same way at the same time. The newness will wear off some time, though, and we will work smoothly.

July 15th. Minorville. Major Parker was sick today so I had to take over the duties of the Brigade Adjutant. After attending a celebration late yesterday and staying out on duty until three o'clock this morning, I did not have the clearest mind for thinking, by several jugs full. However everything went along smoothly, and I got out a stack of memorandums calculated to keep Regimental Adjutants busy for some hours. General Cronin has been in a very cheerful mood. This fact deserves mention here because of the effort it takes for him to be cheer-

ful and to refrain from continually riding his staff officers. He delights in riding a horse that will not buck because he feels it his patriotic duty to carry the load without complaining.

The Germans launched another big offensive west of us today, on a fifty mile front. The French were holding according to latest news. I think Fritz has run his limit. Enough American soldiers are now in France to release veteran troops for reserves.

CHAPTER V.

Ghosts of No Man's Land

July 16th. Minorville. News of the stand our boys are making on the banks of the Marne comes to us regularly. It is great to know that in the stiffest offensive Germany has yet started, our American boys stand in his way and revive the memory of "Stonewall" at Bull Run. They do not retire.

I get a great kick out of the education some of our men are giving the French kiddies. This afternoon I was walking down the street, and coming toward me about a block away was a fond mother with her four year old youngster beside her.

Several of our boys passed them, and just as each one came even with them they looked down at the child quickly in a rather startled manner, and then smiled. The mother would nod her head with pride and smile too.

I wondered. When I met them I was startled too, as the little four year old said:

"Hello, you blankety blank *** ** — !! —"

Yes, you guessed it. That's what he said. He and his mother had been told that it meant "Good afternoon, Mr. Soldier, how are you?"

I looked down quickly—and smiled.

The mother nodded, smiled and said "Oui."

I inspected the outpost position last night and went through the town of Fliry. Nothing remains of it but a few plaster walls. I was on the very edge of No Man's Land for the whole night, returning to quarters at four o'clock this morning. It is a hard life up there, but such a pleasure to know that it's worth it.

July 17th. Minorville. Having spent last night inspecting the front line trenches I did a great bit of sleeping today. I slept just a little too long, however, and it was after twelve o'clock before I got my report on the General's desk. This caused him to take a balloon trip upward, and he jumped out without a parachute, coming down most ponderously on my neck. It is rather strange that he should change about in his saddle so much. It seems to be my time to be ridden now, so I'm just gliding along as nicely as possible. In addition to the other difficult and heart-breaking services I am called upon to render my country, I was informed today that I must appreciate the fact that I am merely a secondary personality around here; that I must see that the General has "La Vie Parisienne" and chocolate candy regularly. He wanted to know what I was getting my extra $12.50 a month for as his Aide, anyway. I was told that I must observe and anticipate his

wants, and supply them first, then think of my own welfare. All right, General, Sir, if I must I will.

July 18th. Minorville. Two young officers from our Regiment, Lieutenants Wooten and Rodewald, were ordered to Brigade Headquarters for temporary duty as liaison officers. They are both excellent gentlemen, one from Alabama, the other from Georgia, and I hope will make life here a little more real. I get tired, yea bored, just being present at "Brigade Headquarters." General Cronin is a brilliant man and has a desire to do everything himself, which often leaves me unoccupied. I'd rather take my turn in the trenches. There it is just as quiet and uneventful as it is here, but there I would have my men to look after and would feel responsible. Here my work is important, much more so than the trenches perhaps, but it does not sooth impatient flesh. I will stick here and see it through, just because someone must.

July 19th. Minorville. The continual artillery boom and the buzz of wasp-like airplanes overhead are the only signs of war we have had today. To drive the war still further into oblivion, our 325th band came over and played for us in the afternoon. The strains of the Missouri Waltz brought back the finest recollections of days that are not long agone, but which seem so far back in the past. I retreated into that little

kingdom of solitude where imagination pictures the best hours of the past with the characters we love best, and where we live over again the days that used to be.

It was my night to tour the trenches. In the middle of the night I leaned over the parapet and gazed into the darkness that shrouded that weird, mysterious waste—No Man's Land. The hollow walls of the little village of Limey stood behind me, gruesome and stark. Out there the spirits of heroic souls, whose brave flesh perished for the cause of freedom, move in the darkness. And men, ever cautious, silently prowl in the high grass and wire, with eyes straining into the gloom for a glimpse or sound of the enemy.

Every moment in No Man's Land is tense, and and every sense of a human being is alive and alert, yet No Man's Land is weird and quiet, dark and forbidding. But the strangeness of it, and the knowledge that out there, somewhere, is the enemy you sooner or later must meet and defeat, draws, yes draws you with a powerful charm, into it.

A cricket's chirp in the lookout's post argues that it is all a myth, that there is no war, there can be no such thing as war. But a trench rat racing under the wire, draws the fire of a hundred rifles! Such is the No Man's Land that I was drawn to by such fascination when I was

living in the past and dancing again to the wonderful strains of the "Missouri Waltz."

Tonight, tomorrow—some day that quiet pall of blackness may be transformed into a very Hell. But that is the future. Tonight we are akin!

July 20th. Minorville. It has become an impossibility to do anything satisfactorily around Headquarters. The General has ridden us so constantly and consistently about picayunish details that he has his entire staff demoralized. I appreciate discipline, but I am quick to discern the difference between disciplinary reprimand and a cursing out. The General isn't careful which he uses these days.

This afternoon he called Lieutenants Heron, Maddox and me into his office and asked what was wrong, that our little official family seemed to be unhappy. It was and is. Heron beat Bob and me to it by telling him frankly that he could not get results by "God Damning" him. Bob and I o.k'd that pronto.

He tried to give the meeting a happy ending, but for my part I'm going to get away from here. I want to be up front with my men anyway. When this blows over, I'm going.

July 21st. Minorville. This has been an unusual Sunday in the front line. It has assumed something of the aspect of a holiday. I did not jump out of bed with any undue haste and no

one seemed to feel the tie to the office quite so binding as usual. We have to keep the wheel turning always of course, for the Boches seem to think that "Gott" puts His stamp of approval on crimes committed on the days Christian men used to keep holy. There has been created today an atmosphere similar to the Sundays I used to know at home.

South of us new troops are coming into the line. Northwest of us our older troops are taking thousands of prisoners daily, and proving to the world what we have always known and others would not believe, that the fighting men of America cannot be defeated, even by the most violent and terrible assaults the Huns can deliver.

July 22nd. Minorville. The daily routine made the morning pretty dull. A beautiful sunny morning in France was spoiled by the monotonous paper work and petty office details. It is of such that the great war is composed. At 12:25 however a Boche airplane came over and gave us a little excitement. He dived at a big French observation balloon, detoured like a giant eagle onto one of our balloons and sent it down in flames. The observers jumped out and were lowered gently to the ground by their parachutes. Just a moment later another Boche dashed from behind the clouds and came down with remarkable precision on the French bal-

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

Taudalore Torpedoes Blowing Lanes Through Enemy Wire.
326th Infantry.

loon, and it too came down in flames. I was angered because of our losses, but could not help admire the nerve of the man who did his work with such strategy, so daringly and so well. His feint at the first balloon got them all flustered, and he nicked them both. Rumor has it that our machine guns brought him down in No Man's Land.

July 23rd. Minorville. It has been a very ugly day, the clouds have hovered over us since morning, sending down frequent showers of rain that have got trenches and dugouts pretty sloppy. I made the night trip through the 326th front line in center "W." The Boche were shelling us pretty heavily while I was making the tour. Got in at 3 o'clock in the morning. In the afternoon I went with Lieutenants Wooten, Maddox and Rodewald to the Y. M. C. A. where there is an old battered piano which Lieutenant Rodewald persuaded to recall a tune or two. He is an accomplished musician. There was a Sergeant present who comes from the Keith circuit back home, who dances the shuffles well. Lieutenant Rodewald playing, a Sergeant dancing, and N. C. O's and privates looking on with officers, made a wonderful picture of what we are fighting for—Democracy. Our superior, infallible Regular Army perhaps could not see the point.

July 24th. Minorville. In order to deprive

everyone of the joy of riding me today I stayed up until 5 a. m. this morning writing up my report of the trenches. It went in five hours ahead of time. However, having lost this opportunity, I was waked up just as often as I could get to sleep by my friend the "nail-eater." I got up for the day at 10 a. m. and at 12 o'clock was notified that we will have an exercise in liaison with airplanes tomorrow. I got a horse and with Lieutenants Wooten and Rodewald rode all over the northeast corner of France locating posts of command for the units of our Brigade. I established them, however, and am confident of connecting up when the highly efficient staff officers come around with their messages. Liaison is the most important part of our work. It is unfortunate that it has been greatly neglected to date. Individual victory means nothing when liaison breaks down.

July 25th. Minorville. Our long days at Camp Gordon used to be referred to as "days of training"—inferring that training would be over when we left there. We came to France ready to fight, but our course at Gordon did not include adequate training in the very essential part of our business—liaison. This morning I again verified the liaison posts established yesterday and at 2 o'clock exactly the airplane, identified by proper white streamer, came over our panel. He failed to acknowledge it when sig-

nalled. At 2:12 another plane came over, identified himself by stars, and called for our panels, but failed to acknowledge them. This proves that if we went into an active sector now our liaison would surely break down, and all the valor and fighting qualities of our soldiers could not be put to proper advantage by our high command.

July 26th. Minorville. Routine at Brigade Headquarters is beginning to mean just sitting around waiting for someone to call. The General has taken unto himself all of the work, down to and including the policing of the kitchens, etc., leaving us all with our time piled in almost unbearable heaps upon our hands. I did not come to France to spend my days at the front as I have spent today—waiting like a bell-hop for the General or his Adjutant to call. I came to share the game with the boys in the line, and take my chances in the mud with them. I have not earned an officer's pay today. I think perhaps I will make up for it all soon though. There must be someone at Headquarters, but I believe I am not the somebody for the place. Quiet? Yes, it is peaceful enough for an old folks' home. But I am not old enough to retire.

July 27th. Minorville. Rainy and drizzly today, and nothing to do, I decided I would answer the call that has been ringing in my ears

for so long—the call from the border of No Man's Land. I belong up there, where I can look across the tall grass, and see the outline of the Boche's trenches. And where I can steal out in the darkness and punish the hands that have strangled women and children. I can't do much, but I can do some. I can at least give the Boche a chance to do something more noble than to murder helpless women and children. I can give him a chance to kill a man who will put up a fight.

So it happened that my written request for transfer to the line went to the General this afternoon. In the evening I attended a dance at Aulnois, given by the nurses of the field hospital there. It was wonderful to be with our American girls again. Girls so wonderful too—far from home administering to the wounded in France.

July 25th. Minorville. Weeks do pass almost as fast as days used to, I believe. I never spent longer or more tiresome days, yet when I open my diary to Sunday I start when I discover seven days' entries since the last one. Artillery is booming around here and there, but it does not disturb any of the morning services even when the Hun's mania for ranging on church spires is well known. The townspeople attended mass three times today.

The General informed me that he would help

me to get into any regiment I desired to join. I will soon be back with my same old Regiment, with my same old Company, and my same old Platoon if I have my way. I'll be six months behind all other officers who have had the advantages of all the infantry schools in France. It's a handicap, but never mind.

July 29th. Minorville. Since it has become established that I go back to the line I seem to have dropped out of everything at Headquarters. I had the tour of the front line last night, and after splashing through the mud until five o'clock this morning, I came home, made out my report and went to bed. I slept until exactly twelve o'clock, got up and nobody had anything but kind words to say to me—a sure sign that interest is lost. I went to the 325th in the afternoon and got a cook detailed for the General's mess. I trust he will be a good one and his food so tasty that he will keep the General in good humor with his staff. I had a reunion that was very heartening at the 325th, and I really feel that I am going home, back with the boys in the line.

July 30th. Minorville. Just waiting for an order from the Division. Brigade Headquarters has lost all interest in me now. I went to the trenches for Lieutenant Wooten and made a night tour. That is why I was still awake this morning (July 31st) at 3:30 when the machine

guns and rifles started cracking and the big guns put down a barrage—both ours and Fritzes'. Lieutenant Maddox and I reported to the General's quarters. He rushed Maddox off to the French to ask for a barrage in front of Fliry, then sent me running after him to tell him he had changed his mind. I was trying to find Lieutenant Maddox when I met the "nail eater." He started something about "Sirmon, you call Division—." When I told him that I was on an errand for the General he chewed out meanly through his teeth—"Do it then, and don't you explain to me." The last I heard was a walrus puffing in righteous anger, "Don't y-o-u e-x-p-l-a-i-n to me, Uh huh, Don't y-o-u- e-x-p-l-a-i-n to me." I threw back to him my permission to go to hell. That Adjutant is the meanest white man I ever knew.

July 31st. Minorville. With the Boche throwing his crack Prussian and Bavarian Divisions against our boys on the Reims-Soissons front, and the rumor flying around that we will soon join them there, or go to Italy, a man spending a quiet life at Brigade Headquarters, waiting for orders to go back to the line, may well expect a sudden change. I hope that my expectations come to be realities, and soon. It seems that the attack planned by the Boche this morning fell down for lack of courage, as our observers report having seen about 300 of them at our

front, but they did not advance. In all the terrific cannonading and machine gun firing not one of our men was hurt. There were three slight gas cases only. This proves conclusively that a battle cannot be measured by its noise. Any offensive action on our part now will be welcomed by our men.

August 1st. Minorville. Today, after a very, very slow dragging eleven hours had passed, that order—the one sending me back to the line, back to my old Regiment, back with the boys to live, fight and maybe die with them—came down from the Division Headquarters, and I want to go very badly. The game down there is the only one I know. I may not be much of a man, but I like to play a man's game, and that is "down there." I will not regret my decision for I have always loved the outdoor life, and I feel that I cannot let the Hun drive me inside. Outdoors in peace and indoors in war, has a taint that I am sure does not fit me. Tomorrow I will go back, back to the good old 325th, back to Company "E" of the Second Battalion, and I know I shall find the boys I left on February 14th just the same. I will not have to buy newspapers and chocolate for any General now.

August 2nd. Minorville. I was greatly disappointed that I did not get to go to my Regiment today. The eagle, star and shield, insignia of an Aide de Camp, are not on my collar

now. In their place I have two very plain yet sacred crossed rifles, the insignia of the Infantry. General Cronin sent my pal Bob Maddox and me out to look over the surrounding country for a combat range. I think the old man sent us out that we might be together this last day that I will be here. We were out on horses the entire day and located a fine place for combat work. It hurt pretty badly to leave Bob, a fine upright boy, who has been a constant companion and excellent friend, he the son of Atlanta's foremost citizen—I just a plain country boy from South Alabama. I left Brigade headquarters at 9 o'clock and walked to Manonville, a comfortable and comparatively safe job behind me, the trenches ahead!

August 3rd. The Front. I got up rather late this morning for the very simple reason that I had nothing to do in particular and enjoyed the late hours in bed. I reported to Colonel Whitman and he directed me to be on my way to join my Company, so with my knapsack on my back I started toward the front. No Cadillac to take me down—just plain hiking is mine now. Arrived at Battalion Headquarters at 4 p. m. and a little later went down to my Company in the support lines. There I met Lieutenant Moore and Lieutenant Pinkussohn, who were with the company when I left it, and Captain Fraser and Lieutenant Webster whom I knew quite well.

I went over our position and talked with the enlisted men who used to be with me at Camp Gordon. No man can feel better—more sincerely satisfied than I feel tonight. Here with my men in the trenches at last. Thank Heaven, now I feel and know that I am serving my Country.

August 4th. The Front. It is just four years ago today that war was declared. It hardly seems possible that it took us so long to get here, but I guess our statesmen knew best. I came away from Regimental Headquarters assured by half a dozen people that my blankets would be sent right down after me. I feel stiff and have sore spots all over me to remind me that somebody failed to make good. The dugout in which I slept had two features I shall not forget—the floor was damp, and it was hard. Still I slept well. Fritz did not drop any shells on me, and what more could a soldier ask? We have a good position here just behind a very steep slope with dugouts into the hillsides. The men walk about leisurely behind the hill with a feeling of perfect safety, in spite of the 77 that Fritz dropped in the road this afternoon. Our men immediately began to speculate and almost reached the point of staking money that he couldn't do it again. Fritz isn't frightful to them.

August 5th. The Front. Rumors that we are

to be relieved by some Division are superseded by facts now. Reconnaissance parties whiz by in Cadillacs, Nationals and various other American cars on every road. The 89th Division, the Kansas lads, are the relieving unit. Some of the veteran Divisions of Chateau Thierry fame are near us now too, and they tell some exciting stories of the big drive. In support we do not have a great deal to do. I am sorry we will not go into the line here again for I would like to have a whirl at a Boche patrol before we get out. It has been an ugly day—rain and mud are more aggravating than German shells, especially when I steal away to Manonville to see my little friend there. The whole family are interesting, and interested, which I suppose accounts for my risking so much to sneak out of the support position to see them.

August 6th. The Front. If I had not steeled myself against grumbling in all its forms I would at least shrug my shoulders at Regimental Headquarters, for those boards in my dugout are no softer now than they were night before last, and the mud brought in on careless feet yesterday left a generous number of pitted places on my frame, which is not at all adapted to such incisions. My bedding roll certainly is not performing a valuable military service at Headquarters, and empty trucks would not suffer from the weight of it down this far.

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

Wounded of 82nd and 89th Divisions Waiting for Ambulances Following Attack Noted August 7th.

The wild boys from the West came in this afternoon, and though not due until twenty-four hours later, seemed annoyed that we were so poorly prepared to serve them. Uncle Sam gives to each man one day's ration, and limits him to thirty pounds of luggage, so when fifteen men come from the rear and bring nothing with them, we beg consideration.

August 7th. The Front. No one deals any more with mere possibilities over here. It is the transforming of the impossible to the possible that makes war interesting. So with the problem of placing two thousand men where we have barely been able to put one thousand to date, caused no comment when it confronted us this morning. After traveling for "beaucoup" miles, the evening found the task completed, and I assembled a jubilant company and gave place to the Kansas boys of the 89th Division.

By eight o'clock I was in Manonville and—my French friends invited me to occupy one of their rooms. Since billets are as available usually for stables as they are for men to sleep in, I accepted and was given a very clean, well kept room and a bed that would make the world's blue ribbon grouch become a humorist.

With two beautiful girls who are so solicitous of my comfort and general well being, there is promise of a pleasant stay. I have been acquainted with the fiery blonde, Germaine, for some time.

The Boche were evidently wise to the fact of our relief tonight. In the midst of it they began a heavy gas attack. Most of it is launched against the 326th position to our left. His guns are still roaring, damn him.

August 8th. Manonville. Theoretically a man is tired, worn out and sleepy after a relief is completed. Actually he is dirty, for there is no running water in the trenches, though there are many kinds of "running" vermin that cover the body almost as completely as water, but with different effect. Based on the above theory and fact, we are entitled to twenty-four hours rest after we reach the reserve, to sleep and bathe. This time theory became fact, so we've spent a very easy day.

With the first hitch in the trenches behind us, we let loose in Manonville. In the little combination home and grocery store where the two Madamoiselles bid me make my home, the boys gathered for the night. The old Frenchman's cellar gave up many bottles of its champagne and the girls an abundance of kisses and affection. Our Battalion was leaving the sector at 1:30 a. m. About 12:30 the gang left me to my own billet and friends. Kind of them, that.

Parting with Germaine was hurried but sweet. I grabbed my hat, musette bag and a quart of champagne at 1:25 and made for the station where the outfit was already entrained. I reach-

ed the top of the hill, some 400 yards away, when I heard Blondy Flournoy shouting—"Bill, Bill!! BILL!!!" Just at that moment two toots from its whistle and the midget Decauville engine moved off with its heavily loaded flat cars.

I dashed down the hill almost desperately. Fortunately the tracks made a complete U turn, recrossing the road. I swung a stanchion of the last car as the turn was completed and the train gathered speed down the straightaway.

As I hopped aboard, I threw the champagne in the midst of the men on the car.

"I've got him," said one of the boys as he grabbed my arm and held me on.

"I've got this bottle," said another about twelve feet away.

August 9th. Bruly. After the hurried and somewhat undignified departure from my billet early this morning, my troubles set in. We arrived at some dark hour later at a point that is not marked by any distinguishing feature, not even a shade tree or a well. We were detrained and committed to the vicious handling of a guide who did not know where the devil he wanted to take us. He did not take the trouble to acquaint us with his ignorance before we started, so we passed a hundred yards east of Bruly, our destination, and went a mile beyond to Pagney, in which none of us were interested,

before he discovered his mistake. He then told us that he had forgotten the road. I found a Frenchman, and after going through a series of physical contortions succeeded in executing enough French to find out that the way to Bruly was to back-track, completing a ten mile circuit. We finally got there, and then we slept.

August 10th. Bruly. While reconnoitering drill grounds this morning Captain Flournoy and I came upon an old fort on the heights of St. Michel, above Toul. It is certainly "ye olde forte" with its towers, moat and drawbridges. It is completely surrounded by perfect rows of wire and pickets, while the old moat, though dry, is still too much for infantry to pass. We obtained permission from a French officer and rode through the grounds. It is a circular stronghold dug into the ground, with quarters excellently equipped, all in the heart of the hill. All lookout posts are concrete or steel, and the artillery implacements are camouflaged so that they cannot be distinguished from the front, and are closed so only those who manage the guns may get to them. Before the coming of modern artillery, no force could ever take this place, and one has only to look here to realize that there are many more like it in this vicinity, which explains why Toul is the second stronghold of France.

August 11th. Bruly.

While the Battle Waits

I have left you, Mars, I have wandered far, and
I shall be gone for awhile,
Away from your shambles of fighting men,
to a world where faces smile.
I'm but a boy again, down the lane, with frolicking friends I play,
Out in the fields, for the flowers of spring are
budding in the suns of May.
From the farm house porch fond parents watch
the antics of wee folk they love,
Calling us "little devils" affectionately, then
"blessed angels sent from above."
We are so free, so free from worry and care,
our world is nothing but joy.
But I stop. Beyond is a sterner world. I am
no longer a boy.
Here are my friends, and others have come to
be my playmates too,
In the big game of life, where rules are more
stringent and new.
Fond hearts have not forgotten to love, as they
loved such a long time ago.
So I am still happy, joyous and free, in a
world unsullied by woe.
She that I love, the wonderful girl, whose heart
is one with my own,
Is listening again as I carefully explain, why
she should ne'er live alone.

Ah, Mars, you broke in, I'm back again now,
with you by your claret-fed stream;
But I'll play your game well, fight Perry to
hell, for the girl that I kissed in my dream.

August 12th. Bruly. Sherman, speaking of particular stages of war, was most emphatically right, but there are often various other elements mixed in with it that tend to modify that word "hell." After a very busy day, I went to Toul with Lieutenants Webster and Bettes and met several French officers of the 341st Regiment. It was really a delightful evening, with wine and song, but—and here came the rub—the women were inaccessible. The Military Police objected. What with chimney sweeping, wall scaling, observing an air raid from tops of the houses, and camouflaging an American officer in a French uniform, we put it over, and spent the greater part of the night merrily. Then we had a painful seven miles to "walk home" to Bruly to beat the bugler at Reveille. I was assured by the French that the Germans will never capture me!

August 13th. Chateau Dombasle, Front Line. War is truly a game of surprises. I went out sleepily to Reveille this morning intent on doing a day of good hard drill in the offensive formation of small units. The first order was for me to take charge of the Company at once. When I reported the Company, Order Number

Two was for me to be ready in forty minutes to go as advance Company Commander to reconnoitre front line positions into which we will move later. I was ready with four sergeants and my orderly at the designated hour. The truck arrived an hour late, and we made a three hour trip over dusty chalk roads through Lorraine, to a point north of Nancy. I arrived at the Headquarters of the Compaany we will relieve, at 12:30 p. m. I found a very congenial bunch of Lieutenants and a mediocre National Guard Captain at dinner. We will relieve the Second Division, the heroes of Chateau Thierry and Soissons. I covered our entire front and visited the French on our right. A hard day, following a riotous night, has got me feeling lower than Davy Jones' locker.

August 14th. Front Line. Not content with the ground covered yesterday I busied myself over our sector again today and left my sergeants at the strong points to become familiar with the daily routine in this type of resistance center, which is very different from the class of defense we have had in the other sector. While out on one of my trips I came across a covey of European Partridges and killed two of them with my pistol. This the officers declare to be a new diversion—quail hunting in No Man's Land with a forty five pistol. They are very large birds, and tender. There are hundreds

of them everywhere. France evidently protects her game by law or hunters would certainly keep the coveys down to smaller size. This sector is very quiet and I am sure will be a fine summer or winter home for our boys. Night patrols are the only hostile groups that are active here.

August 15th. Front Line. Captain Becksteen, a very early riser, called me from the blankets at 6:30. I visited several points in the Regimental sector during the day and made a good long trip over to the French on our right. The most interesting of all was the strong point in Port Sur Seille. The town is all battered into ruins. The modern buildings have only the shells of walls standing here and there, and though scarred and torn, the old stone tower built when Rome ruled Gaul, proudly stands by the river Seille. At least ten big shells from the Hun's most powerful and modern cannon have struck it and have barely nicked its ten foot solid stone walls. At the foot of the tower an old Roman bridge spans the Seille. In this day of wonderful inventions and gigantic construction, it is interesting to remark among the ruins of the work of modern man, these two Roman structures erect. Rome built well.

August 16th. Front Line. After a very quiet day, visiting the French who are on our right and the Company on our left, Major Hawkins

The Old Roman Tower at Port Sur Seille. The Guns that Demolished Liege and Namur Barely Nicked Its Ancient Walls.

asked if I would like to go along with a patrol tonight. Would I?

For months I have looked over our parapets into that weird ghostland and become fascinated by its mystery. I have wanted to go into it, explore it, brave its hidden dangers. My chance had come. I thought of Bob Service's gripping little ballad "Over the Parapet"—one verse of it in particular,

"Yet, oh, it's great to be here with danger,
Here in the weird, death-pregnant dark,
In the devil's pasture a stealthy ranger,
When the moon is decently hiding. Hark!
What was that? Was it just the shiver
Of an eerie wind or a clammy hand?
The rustle of grass, or the passing quiver
Of one of the ghosts of No Man's Land?"

"Heigh-ho! by day its just prosy duty,
Doing the same old song and dance;
But oh! with the night—joy, glory, beauty:
Over the parapet—Life, Romance!"

Well, anyway I went over. I was introduced to the Patrol Commander, Lieutenant Hazelwood, at Port Sur Seille. I had never seen him before.

As soon as night was on in earnest, we moved out. Major Hawkins and Lieutenants Wood and Hill, of our Battalion, were also along. Several

enlisted men too. We could exercise no command—we were just visitors, along to observe and become familiar with the sector.

Moving about No Man's Land I was badly frightened. The fear of the unknown had me in its grip. Could the Germans see us? Could they hear us? Would they suddenly attack us from our flank?

We moved down between the lines to a point in front of the French position. An old road passed through the German wire here, and it was left open. Why? Just a moment.

Hazelwood halted the Patrol and investigated the opening almost to its farthest side. Nothing happened, so we moved forward in single file, to pass inside the Boche lines. We were crawling along slowly. I was shaking badly, but swearing to myself I would not run. The road felt track-beaten to me, and I was commenting on this mentally, when one shot, then a hundred broke loose, flanking us from both sides. Hand grenades were bursting all around and over us, and flares had turned the night into day.

We were caught—successfully ambushed! We were hemmed in on both sides by the heavy German wire. We could not deploy.

I heard Lieutenant Hazelwood shout, "Tell Major Hawkins that Hazelwood is wounded."

There was a terrific explosion right beside me. I turned, and a private lay there, groaning.

"Are you hurt?" I asked.

"I think my hip's blown off," he said.

I felt his hip and put my hand into a ghastly hole the potato-masher had made.

The Patrol broke. I wanted to shoot, but could see no Germans to shoot at. They had two machine guns and several riflemen flanking the opening. I had jumped to the side of it. In the flare lights I could see our men escaping, running back out of the wire. Strangely enough I did not think of running away. I was not even shaking now. Not that I was thinking of those things at the time. I don't know that I was thinking at all. It was a case of being in a hot, tight corner, and somehow or other there was no time to think.

Soon everyone who was not wounded, was gone. The terrible firing continued. A short distance from me was a shell hole. I rolled the wounded man beside me into it. I saw several wounded and got them into the one hole. I found Hazelwood with several bullet wounds in his body and one foot blown off by a grenade. None of the wounded were able to do more than carry themselves.

Sergeant Garner, of our Regiment, appeared out of the dark. He said that Lieutenant Wood was dying in the wire to our left. I could not help him. I had seven wounded of my own, but told him I would cover the opening with a rifle

until he could get away. He saluted, and got Wood and saved him.

Firing had not slackened. I got the six enlisted men to the edge of No Man's Land and showed them how to get over to our lines, and watched them hobble away, assisting each other.

I went back into the wire for Hazelwood. No flare was up. Darkness was complete except for flashes of grenades and rifles. I crawled too far, and found myself almost to the enemy trench as a flare went up and showed me German riflemen shooting into the wire about twelve feet away. I lay still. As the flare went out I made my way to Hazelwood and got him on my back.

Fearing to get into the opening, which was being raked by machine gun and rifle fire, I started out through the wire. We were doing well, the noise of firing covering our efforts until it ceased suddenly. Every noise we made now could be heard. It seemed to me that the grass crackling under my hand, could be heard in Berlin.

But we had to get out. As I struggled with Hazlewood, he bled profusely. He soon had my back soaked in blood and it became slippery. He weighed 180 pounds, and as I tip the scales at 135 it was hard to keep him balanced. I would have to throw him over the wire entangle-

ments sometimes and then crawl after him. This would cause the Boche to shoot up their flares and rake the wire again. We would have to remain mighty still.

Hazelwood was becoming very weak. He begged me to leave him. He constantly wanted to rest. I was afraid he would become unconscious or bleed to death before I could tend to his wounds. The enemy decided we were wounded in the wire, and came out to get us. I could hear them talking.

They came into the wire in small groups. I told Hazelwood to remain away from me as I was going to fight them if they discovered us. I would not be taken prisoner. He asked that I stay right by him. If I was killed, he wanted to go too. I took out four grenades, his and the two I carried, and took out my forty-five and waited. One party of three Boche came within five feet of us. I kept them covered, for the slightest sign that they had seen us was to be my cue to kill them. It was much wiser not to fire otherwise. There were too many others near by, and they would annihilate us sooner or later if we were discovered.

The Germans, by some miracle, missed us. When they returned to the trench I gradually made my way out, with Hazelwood slipping and sliding off and on my back. Out of the wire, although still only 35 yards from the Germans,

my relief was so great I actually felt safe. I stood up and undertook to lift my comrade up on my shoulder. As I lifted, I would get him about waist high and he would groan with pain. I cautioned him to be quiet, but each lift brought the same result until I discovered that all of his foot had been blown away except a long piece of skin, to which was attached his big toe. I was standing on this toe, endeavoring to lift him on my shoulder. No wonder he would groan!

This corrected, I carried him down into No Man's Land. I dressed his wounds and put a tourniquet above his knee to check the loss of blood. He had become unconscious.

To the left of me was a forest through which flows the river Seille. Daylight was not far off now so I might have to hide out there.

There came the faint sound of breaking sticks. Somebody was walking cautiously about the woods. Were they friend or foe? If friend, I could make myself known and we would be saved. If foe, by the same token we would be lost. I decided on silence.

The password last night was "Nevada." I heard Major Hawkins say "Kick the brush and say 'Nevada,' so if there are any wounded they will answer you."

Welcome, thrice welcome words were these. I ran to the edge of the woods and called "Nevada."

Silence!

Then I gave the parole, which was "Austin."

Major Hawkins answered, "Bill."

He was back with a relief patrol.

"Yes, sir," I called back to him.

Hazelwood to the hospital. Me to bed. The night's adventure was over!

> N. B.—I have never seen Lieutenant Hazelwood since. I learned, however, that his leg was amputated at the knee, and he lived.

This little incident of the great war illustrates the devotion to duty and country inherent in every Doughboy. No question of friendship or personal acquaintance here—just doughboy for doughboy, uniform for uniform.

Since the eventful night described above, I have gone back in my diary to insert the following extract of a General Order issued by Major General Duncan of the 82nd Division, announcing the award of the Distinguished Service Cross for my conduct in the affair on the night of August 16th. The Order is dated December 25th, 1918. Sort of a Christmas present.

On February 16th, 1919, on the Plains of Demarien, where Caesar fought his greatest battle against the Gallic Chieftain Vercingetorix, I was decorated by General Pershing.

The Legion of Honor of France and the Croix

de Guerre with Palm, were also awarded me on citations by Marshal Petain.

The Order follows:

Headquarters, 82nd Division,
American Expeditionary Force, France.
25 December, 1918.

General Orders
No. 47

EXTRACT

1. The Commanding General announces to the Command that the Commander-in-Chief, in the name of the President, has awarded the Distinguished Service Cross to the following officers and soldiers, for the acts of extraordinary heroism described after their names:

Captain William A. Sirmon, 325th Infantry.

For extraordinary heroism in action near Clemery, France, 16 August, 1918.

At the imminent risk of his own life, Captain Sirmon rescued another officer by carrying him at night through enemy wire, and under heavy machine gun fire, for 300 yards to a place of safety, where he dressed the wounds of the disabled officer.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

2. The Commanding General takes particular pride in announcing to the Command these fine examples of courage and self-sacrifice. Such deeds are evidence of that fine spirit of heroism

which is innate in the highest type of the American soldier, and responds unfailingly to the call of duty, wherever or whenever it may come.

3. This Order will be read to all organizations at the first formation after its receipt.

By Command of Major General Duncan.

Gordon Johnston,
Chief of Staff.

R. L. Boyd,
Major, A. G. D., Adjutant.

CHAPTER VI.

Darkness and Death.

August 17th. The Front. The day began by watching the ambulance going to the rear with wounded from last night's affair. Sergeant Garner, whose face I remember from last night, deserves a great deal of credit for bringing in Lieutenant Wood. They are boys from the same town, Cedartown, Georgia, and both of the very best mould.

I learned today that Lieutenant Lemuel Hill, of Columbus, Georgia, rendered fine service in gathering up the wounded in No Man's Land while the Boche were still raking it with fire. He rallied all of the men who were escaping from the wire that he could and then began scouting up the wounded. He found Garner and Wood and helped them in.

We will fix up Mr. Fritz before many moons. Our Division arrived during the night and my Company moved into the front line in the early morning. Having been out all night and nearly all in carrying a 180-pound man, I slept just about all the day. With all of last night's excitement and the bustle of reliefs to keep me awake, I slept on just the same. We bade good-

bye to the 2nd Division tonight and wished them good luck. They licked Fritz properly at Chateau Thierry and say they are ready to do it again. We feel the same way.

August 18th. The Front. Speaking of quiet sectors, this is no place for an Irishman. I haven't heard one shot fired during the day by artillery since I came here. Only the anti-aircraft guns disturb the quiet, and they only make one hit out of every seven thousand shots fired. For those who desire the actual occupation of the front for the training of raw troops, this is an ideal location. We are occupying the Chateau Dombasle and enjoying all the comforts of home, including cushion chairs and splendid spring beds. The plums and apples of No Man's Land make excellent pies, with blackberries, sugar and cream for a change. Nothing could be more delightful than the shady groves with their cold springs of water, where our strong points are located. Really, if the sporting features were a little less dangerous, this would be a wonderful summer resort. I wish we could stir something up.

August 19th. The Front. Fritz has a mean habit of prowling around at night, which causes me to sit up and watch for him. I don't want him putting anything over when I am not looking. This nightly watch calls for a daily sleep, so twelve o'clock found me at breakfast today.

In the afternoon I made a reconnaissance into No Man's Land and got pretty well over toward Fritz's side, but he did not pay me any compliments. This trip took me as far over as the Castle of Clemery. It is a splendid old chateau and has several beautiful statues left behind. The winding staircase leads up into a tower, from which I could overlook the Boche lines for miles. Incidentally I got a first class view of the organized strong point our patrol got into the other night. I am ready to ambush Fritz tonight, now. I came back through the French sector. A new crowd is on our right—the 113th Infantry.

August 20th. The Front. I stayed out in the grass in No Man's Land until the wee small hours this morning waiting for Fritz to come out of his shell. He did not come my way, but the boys to my left smoked him up to a hundred. He tried a silent raid on one of our posts with very sad results for himself. It is a peculiar feeling that follows a fellow out there in the night. While walking along in patrol formation one is alert and tense and expectant. You feel like No Man's Land is very narrow and that any Boche within five miles must surely see the patrol, and all that tramping and crashing must be heard. But when you have reached your objective and you have laid your ambush, No Man's Land becomes more spacious than

Russia, and you are certain Fritz could get right up on you before being discovered, but knowing you have the drop on him, if he would only come!

August 21st. The Front. Having watched the anti-aircraft guns of both sides firing on airplanes ever since my arrival in France, with the number of machines brought down at flat zero, I had begun to wonder what they are for. But since coming to this sector, where there is no artillery activity, I am thankful to the "archies" for reminding us frequently that there is still a war on. With each of our platoons garrisoning a strong point, with orders that do not change, a fellow hasn't very much to worry about.

The boys have plenty of time to chase the "cooties" through their underwear and most of them have minutes to spare. So far I have been denied this pastime. The rats, rather the large animals said to have developed from the rat, are very much in evidence, and are quite useful in the construction of dugouts. Tonight is my night beyond the wire.

August 22nd. The Front. Being a man of somewhat moderate tastes I am not fond of too much of anything, even the best. Last night I laid a little trap for Heinie within a few hundred yards of his machine guns, and after the

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

Chopping the German Wire. Note Its Height and Density.

broad trail we mashed down through the cane brake along the river, with all of the attendant noise, I am quite satisfied to have come away with an even break with Fritz, and don't believe I will return to the same place soon. The clearest, fullest moon I have ever looked upon, shone down steadily all the time, and I know it was the most unromantic moon in the big space up there. I laid out until 2:30 a. m. and watched the anti-aircraft, starlights and shrapnel bursting about our airplanes bombing Metz. Fritz certainly puts up some wonderful lights. I came in and have slept most of the day. That is why this is becoming a record of nightly events instead of the little things that pass in the day.

August 23rd. The Front. Last night was my night "before the wire," and it was a lively one. From ten o'clock until the small hours of the morning there was almost continuous machine gun fire and grenades exploding on both sides of my position. A very severe electrical storm came up about one o'clock, accompanied by a strong wind. The night became very dark and the wind swaying the fields of straw in front of us gave it the appearance of wave after wave of advancing infantry. It was a poor night for ambushing and the hard rain that followed the wind, thunder and lightning was pretty cool. It is a fine spirit that keeps men cheer-

ful when the only clothes they have are drenched, and they must sleep in them all day.

How my men have come to laugh at war! Most of them carry the full $10,000 in government insurance. Last night, and every night, as we start out on our raids or sorties into No Man's Land, knowing that within an hour many of us, or even all of us, might be dead, we chant the funeral dirge, repeating over and over to its mournful tune,

"Ten Thousand Dollars For The Folks At Home"

August 24th. The Front. No one is sorry that we are not to be relieved tonight. I do not believe there is any place in this sector quite so comfortable and pleasant as the front line position that we occupy. The French and the Boche have maintained a truce along this front for so long that it is hard to believe it is part of a battle line. All of the comforts of home are available and the strong points in the little woods are regular picnic grounds. Outside of the "stand to" from 3 until 5 a. m. and the patrolling, we have to do just enough work to keep from over-resting ourselves. So with rumor of morning drill and afternoon problems in reserve coming down to us, we are quite content to stay even another day up here near Jerry. All being well that ends well, this has been a good day.

August 25th. The Front. Although in the past someone constructed a Chapel on the third floor of the Chateau Dombasle, which overlooks several square miles of the German lines and beyond, we had no services today. However, a visit from our new Chaplain put us on our Sabbath behavior for an hour or two. The relief of a Company in the front line position does not allow for much time to ponder the day and date, so I'm afraid we have let circumstances compell us to labor, and maybe become a little peeved on the Sabbath Day. Company "L's" advance party arrived soon after noon and we showed them the various positions that Corps Headquarters says must not be surrendered. The relieving company, however, did not follow its advance party until after 12 o'clock midnight. At 8:30 a. m. "tomorrow" we had completed the relief and faced toward the rear. How I hate to go.

August 26th. Landremont. Just as the sun crept far enough toward the horizon to begin melting the thick black night into the gray dawn, I led a very tired but stout-hearted company of soldiers through the shell smashed village of St. Genevieve. Only a few of the villagers remain in the town and it wears all of the marks that suggest desolation. A sentry at each entrance to the place gives it no claim to life, for a soldier often stands guard among

the dead on the battlefield. The old men moving out into the fields make one think of ghosts deserting their graves. Beyond St. Genevieve, however, a different picture was before us. Along the road on the slope of the mountains, we could look up the valley of the Moselle and the living fields and villages, with the towers of medieval castles rising out of them, made a sharp contrast to the desolation less than half mile behind us.

August 27th. Landremont. Yesterday morning I stood for a moment wrapped in what might be called the spell of the Moselle Valley, and the wonderful hills that rise on beyond it. I despaired that man was not gifted to paint nature in all its glory. Today I found no thrill tickling my blood as I tramped through this wonderful valley and up and down those scenic hills participating in a tactical problem under the keen observing eye of General Cronin. The machine gun nests and lines of German infantry that some staff officer's imagination had placed along the hillsides for me to attack, sheared them of all their grandeur. They were steep, and were covered with heavy clods of dirt that were as unromantic as any pessimist could picture them. We had a good workout though, and all came home less romantic, but wiser in a military way.

August 28th. Landremont. Someone, sometime, evidently a very long time ago, associated the words "reserve" and "rest." It must have been as I say, merely an association of words which had nothing to do with ideas or facts. Or else time has changed sufficiently to sever whatever connection actually existed, for we were out at 6 a. m. and had just time enough to eat breakfast before being burdened down with full equipment, down to wearing steel helmets, and hustled out on another tactical problem. Problems are interesting and profitable exercises, but I must confess that they involve a great deal of work. If we had taken as much ground from old Jerry in reality as we have in our imaginary attacks, he wouldn't have the back yard of the Capitol left. Just wait, though, he is the man we charge it all to, and we will collect our bills.

August 29th. Landremont. How remarkable! Without any effort through prominent acquaintances, and without an Act of Congress, I was detailed as Officer of the Day, and did not have to pack down any French soil on today's problems. In fact I haven't had anything to do but just be the Officer of the Day. I should have staked a couple of thousand on the races today, for with this luck I must certainly have won.

The word "problem" first became slightly

odorous to me in my school days, when it confronted me each morning on the blackboard, and each evening on my slate. The greater military dignity it has assumed, which combines physical and mental torture and substitutes a sarcastic General for a sweet lady teacher, has not tended to improve the odor in the least. It is with regret that I must record in order to follow facts, that I was relieved as Officer of the Day at 6:30 p. m.

August 30th. Landremont. I discovered this morning, purely by accident, that the Captain and I have a very charming neighbor. After a day of drill and our usual problem had been solved in the most approved manner, I made it convenient to inquire casually of our portly landlady, about the interesting neighbor, who, I must add now, is a young lady. I was informed that she is unmarried, that she is the pride of Landremont, and that everybody likes her. Personally. I liked her at first sight. Anyway, having gone through the four years of the war, and still retaining her virtue, her heart is her own. She is known among the village people as Joan of Arc because of her remarkable achievement, and I was assured that any attention I should devote to Joan must be strictly censored and approved by the elders of the village. Having fortified myself with this information, I got no further than an introduction.

August 31st. Landremont. Spent last night out in front of our wire in No Man's Land in charge of a patrol with a Captain and First Lieutenant (senior to me). They were along to give advice in a vain search for two Lieutenants and two Corporals who wandered off and failed to return. I did not bother to wait around to help out with inspection today. I slept, and slept very soundly until the sun had dropped so far down that I thought it was rising in the west when I came to. The band was out playing for us, and a familiar tune now and then brought back many pictures of the past and memories that the Boche bullets can never kill. When these come to me I am not morose and unhappy, but my heart becomes light and I wonder how many Boche I will have to get to deserve such friends, and enjoy such pleasures again.

September 1st. Landremont. Since tomorrow we may leave, I must devote this page to the solemn dedication of billet Captain Young H. Fraser and I have enjoyed during our sojourn in reserve. It is a modest little house, is Number 38. It does not advertise its virtues, and one looking upon its exterior might never suspect them. But should such spectator ever cross the door-sill, he would at least become suspicious, though it is improbable that the true nature of things would dawn upon him. Whether

he investigated further would depend largely upon the amount of odor he could resist. Four hogs at the base of the stairway, two cows and as many calves under our bedroom, and fifty Belgian hares adjoining the parlor, create an odor that challenges the most sickening fumes that chlorine or any other gas may produce. It is necessary to state that we stayed there, but needless to add that we had no visitors.

September 2nd. Landremont. I have not put in many days of more interesting work than to-day's has been. I took all of the detachments selected for patrolling, from the four companies of our Battalion, and had them on the range for special drill. I put them through a series of patrol formations, gave them instruction in the elements of scouting, target practice in combat groups, and then conducted several competitions in deployment and assembly, in which Company "E" was each time the victor. I came in late and found all in readiness to move from reserve to the support position. Having planned a little party for Fritz's backyard for tomorrow night, I put in a request to go to Nancy tomorrow to buy some necessary equipment for my men. I have a pass and the Colonel's car for an early departure tomorrow.

September 3rd. The Front. According to arrangements, I went down to Nancy this morning with Lieutenant Tilley. It was a beautiful

auto drive up the valley of the Moselle most of the way, and I enjoyed it all. The hills on either side are worn smooth by ages of rainfall, and that regular cultivation with the variously-colored crops makes a natural picture that the most gifted artist can never put on canvas. Europe is indeed the old world, and every mark upon it betrays its age. These beautifully cultivated valleys and hills wear an appearance of dignity that only the experiences of eons of Time could give them. The little villages built around the Chateaus and medieval castles look so much like the illustrations and descriptions in our old literature. Only the customs of "ye olden days" and the armored knights are gone. The glory of today's mad battlefields are foreign to their dignity.

September 4th. The Front. The raids go on. For two days I was over airplane photographs and maps of the enemy positions, planning a "warming up" party for Fritz. I had the men back in reserve rehearsing the attack. Last night I crossed over No Man's Land with 96 men, left 32 of them to protect the opening for our return, and passed into the German lines where we had previously hacked an entrance.

It is ticklish business moving through his wire entanglements, as experience has taught me. Last night we had to penetrate his defense for more than a mile, crossing four successive

bands of his barbed wire. He is prepared to make his retreat from the present position a costly one for us. We found newly constructed machine gun implacements, echeloned all the way back along the ridges. Most of them were covered with awnings to keep them dry.

We got into his lines about ten o'clock, but it was not until about 2:15 this morning that we finally made our attack. I had bought hemp-soled "sneakers" for my men in Nancy yesterday, so we could prowl about the Boche back yard quietly. I controlled my patrol by a series of soft bird-like whistling signals. Never a word was spoken.

The hours from ten o'clock until two fifteen were nerve-racking ones. We were always conscious that the German army was all around us, and we could not tell what form his attack might take. He might be watching us, and suddenly rise up all around us, or we might be walking into another trap where he would mow us down with machine guns, and blow us to pieces with grenades. It is the unknown that man fears. Give him a definite enemy and he will make his attack daringly, but none except those who have experienced it, will ever know the terrific strain of the hours of suspense, facing the unknown.

We were nearing our point of attack. We had circled it successfully, and were approaching

from the rear. It was black darkness that shrouded our movements. Suddenly a flare went into the air. Every man dropped. As the flare opened up, not a man could be seen. When it had burned out, I deployed my men and moved forward. The suspense was over. We now had the enemy spotted and could make our attack. The unknown had disappeared.

Another flare went up, this time to our left flank. That was not so good. As it opened up I saw three of my men go down late. The Germans saw them too, and from front and flank they opened up on us with machine gun and rifle fire. It was plenty hot.

I knew the terrain perfectly from photographs and maps. To our right were the dark walls of the town of Eply. I sent Lieutenant McCord with half of our patrol to get across the trenches leading into Eply, so the Boche could not escape when I charged them with the bayonet.

No use wasting time now. We started crawling forward. It sounded like a million bullets per second were cracking over us. The Germans were firing high. I would not open fire because the flashes from our guns would show them their mistake. We kept advancing. A German grenade fell in front of my face, the handle barely missing my nose. I slid backward some way, I don't know how, and threw

my arm across my face as it exploded. I was wounded slightly in the right arm by the handle and a piece of the metal casing. Corporal Sadkowski on my right, did not move quickly enough and the whole left side of his face was horribly mutilated. In my dash away from the grenade I shoved Corporal Coleman, a little bunch of unadulterated courage, along with me. As the explosion came, he snickered and said, "What's the matter, Lieutenant, are they about to get you?"

We could not wait now. We would be blown to pieces, so I got to my hands and knees and said, "Let's go boys, let's go." We opened fire and hurled grenades at the German position. Every man down the line to my right and left repeated my words. Instantly I knew that I had to get out in front.

I did not say "Give 'em hell, boys," nor "Charge, my brave lads." What I said I said in deadly earnest—"Company 'E,' PLEASE COME ON!" Company "E" came. Sadkowski came cursing and firing from the hip. A shout like that from a tribe of Apache Indians went up as we dashed for the Boche position with our bayonets. I jumped into the German trench about six feet ahead of my men. I learned when I got in that one of Lieutenant Bettes scouts who had not seen me rush up, threw his rifle up to kill me. Bettes had no time to say

"stop," so knocked him down in time to save me.

The Germans dashed down the trench. With McCord in position we had them trapped, but Mac had not gotten there. As I landed in the trench Corporal Storey came in behind me. "Lieutenant Sirmon," he shouted.

"What is it, Storey," I asked.

"I think I'm going, Sir," he said, as he put his hand on my shoulder. He fell unconscious.

Sadkowski was still cursing, cursing.

Private Coyle went temporarily insane and attacked Private Brewer with his bayonet. His mouth was foaming and he was raving.

"Kill him, kill him! He's a damned German!"

Brewer backed away, parrying each thrust and yelling,

"I'm Company 'E,' I'm Company 'E'!"

We grabbed Coyle and held him. We mopped up the trenches, took everything in sight for identification, and prepared to get away. We had to be fast now. The gray dawn would soon be upon us. Sadkowski had lost so much blood we had to carry him. Storey was perhaps dead. Other wounded could carry themselves. We had agreed never to leave one of our patrol in the German lines, dead or alive.

Lieutenant Bettes, our Battalion scout officer, found a trail leading out of the German lines. It proved to be the opening through which they

sent their own patrols into No Man's Land. This probably saved us all. It enabled us to escape quickly.

We had just gotten into our lines when the Boche put down a barrage in front of his wire that must have cost him $300,000. This was to catch us coming out, or keep us with him until daylight. We had beat him to it.

Lieutenant Bailey, five feet five inches, but all fight, was in charge of our strong point at Port Sur Seille, where we re-entered our lines. The barrage had him thinking that the Germans were going to make an attack. We could not convince him otherwise. He determined to signal for a protective barrage of his own. He had three signal rockets, all neatly in line. One was for a protective barrage, one that the Germans were sending over gas, and a third an infantry advance.

Bailey lighted the signal for a barrage. As the rocket started to spew, it lighted both of the others. Seeing this and not wanting to signal everything at once he grabbed them all, and for a moment it was an exciting question as to whether he would be taken up with them. He was painfully burned, but having no more rockets handy we were saved a useless expenditure of ammunition.

Storey became conscious. He had several bul-

let wounds. Sadkowski was still raving when we put him in the ambulance.

A bullet had ripped the cross-guns and U. S. Insignia off my collar, but aside from a stiff right arm, I felt great!

September 5th. In Support. Between 3 and 4 o'clock this morning Fritz evidently became very badly peeved about something and decided that we were the cause of his discomfort. Accordingly, he dropped about 150 good heavy shells on us. He peeved me too, for I cannot be waked up at that hour of the morning and kept jumping around for thirty minutes without feeling ill tempered toward our Boche neighbors. It has been a pretty dreary old day, with mist and clouds and occasional cold showers. I had to listen to two very dry uninteresting lectures from staff officers on subjects that concern that little strip of earth whose difficulties are unknown to them—"The Front Line." Having been on the staff for six months I could not listen with very good grace. At dinner Fritz had to furnish another show. Then sleep.

September 6th. In Support. Not a day of unusual excitement, but enough artillery and aerial activity to keep us from moving about leisurely. Worse even than a German offensive is the drive of staff officers launched against us by someone higher up. I spent several hours listening to staff officers who have never had

even an ambush patrol beyond our own wire, tell how an enemy machine gun nest should be cleared out. One of them described the fire of the German machine gun as a slow pup-pup-pup. I am convinced they used a new model on my patrol. The day has been drizzly and dreary and has lent very little encouragement to the heart that must always put up a smile into the betrayer of spirits—the face. Things are breaking well, so why moan?

September 7th. In Support. The support position in the Battalion does not ordinarily demand a great deal of exertion on the part of its troops. For some reason that I do not know, but can guess pretty closely—we are putting in several hours of strenuous training between each rising and setting of the sun. My young raiding outfit, improperly called patrolling detachment, is quite proud of itself, and works separately. I have to divide my time between them and my own platoon. The staff offensive has lulled for a day at least, and a sigh of relief rose even above the noise of the German high explosive, mingled with the rumble of our own cannon. I have had to struggle all day to assure the triumph of a high heart over a sick stomach.

Sept. 8th. In Support. When the front is quiet, as it has been today, and it does not rain hard but just drizzles along hour after hour, a man

cannot be blamed if he becomes a little homesick on Sunday. Especially when it is not the kind of homesickness that makes him want to quit it all and squeal, but the kind that fills his heart with pride that he has so much back there to fight for. I know that I have lived most of the day back home with many friends—some of them childhood friends, and I have been a little sad. But such sadness, with so much joy of days long gone, I favor. A soldier often becomes lost in the past that way and lives happily in his dreams and is left with that lonely, sad-like feeling when he comes back to battle again. He is sad, if that is the word, but it is an ill omen for Jerry, for we'll give our all—everything, with a very peculiar smile on our faces, for those whom we meet in the hours of our dreams. How helpless I am to express my feelings and resolve.

September 9th. In Support. When I was but a boy, I used to look with awe upon a man in the uniform of Uncle Sam or one arrayed in the attire of that mysterious land "out west." I read of the deeds of these men and no poet's imagination ever ascribed greater courage to any hero than I bestowed upon the men whose dress was so suggestive to me, of the great things men do.

On September 4th I slept all day because I had patrolled all night, and when I awoke I

made a report of my patrol, that I thought very unsatisfactory because I had no prisoners to deliver. Today I received an order from the Division Commander, the wording of which does justice to the heroic deeds of my heroes of childhood. My house of cards has fallen! A man, just a plain ordinary man, does his best—and that seems to constitute heroism. Just duty, always duty, performed in spite of obstacles, seems to be all that can be done. No man could fail his leadership with soldiers like mine! Here's the Order:

82nd Div. Headquarters, American E. F.
France,
8 September 1918.

(CONFIDENTIAL)
GENERAL ORDERS
NO. 15.

1. The Division Commander takes great pleasure in announcing to the Command the splendid conduct of 1st Lieutenant W. A. Sirmon, 325th Inf., and the men of his patrol, on the night of Sept. 3rd and 4th. While in command of a patrol in the enemy's territory, and under fire from front and flank by Machine Guns, Lt. Sirmon led his patrol against the Germans, making his attack with a daring and coolness worthy of the best traditions of the service. The Germans were driven away from their guns and retreated in great haste.

The Division Commander hopes that the daring action ofthis officer and his men will furnish an example to be followed by all patrols sent out from this Division.

By Command of Major General Burnham,
R. E. Beebe,
Lieut. Col. General Staff,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:
R. L. Boyd,
Major, A. G. D., Adjutant.

September 10th. The Front. The summer weather that was so slow in coming to us in France was not derelict in leaving, for the chilly autumn winds and rain have been with us for more than a week and it is muddy and sloppy along roads and trails. We moved into the front lines for the fourth time tonight. We took the support position of our Battalion. A dark drizzly night, with a mud covered trail through the woods so slippery men could hardly keep their feet, made it a very difficult relief. There was plenty of cursing and growling, but that is a recognized characteristic of a good soldier. There was no real complaining. We cannot govern the laws of nature nor postpone the war, so why worry? Grin and let it go at that. We have planned another little party for Fritz tomorrow night and I hope he will be "At Home" for us. The only chance he has

of getting away from my boys is to be absent. We are growing into this war. What will we do when we have no war to fight, no Fritz to chase? Can we peddle real estate or ribbon again?

September 11th. The Front. Although I have had schemes upset, hopes blasted and icy rain sprinkled all over me today, I feel as happy as any little fish could tonight. The entertainment I had planned for our neighborly enemies across the river Seille was called off at midnight, just as the last of my raiders were crossing into No Man's Land. It was cancelled by the Corps Commander. The news that this was done to prevent the possible tipping off of the big show, the first All American drive makes the interference on the part of The High Command pardonable at least. Jerry, you old hound, take my compliments with every shell that goes over tonight, and remember, boy, there are many thousands of bayonets whetted up to razor edge to follow them. By morning you will be wiser but there is to be a little melancholia along with your new wisdom. We don't hate you, Jerry, you old fool, but we've got to go home soon, via Berlin!

September 12th. The Front. It seems that I should leave this day blank in my record of personal experiences, for it will live long in the history of the world. Today is "D" day and

"H" hour came at five o'clock this morning. At one A. M. our artillery began its bombardment of the Boche positions and within ten minutes the terrible rumble of guns, thundering America's answer to the Kaiser's statement "America is a democracy whose people are incapable of the iron discipline necessary to win victory on the battlefield," extended from Clemery almost to Verdun. At five o'clock our infantry went over the top and the first genuine American offensive was on. It was a wonderful sensation and we are impatient for our turn to join in the advance. I led an advance across No Man's Land at three this afternoon to establish contact with the enemy. Captain Fraser was in command of the main body. I was ordered not to precipitate a fight but to advance until I had determined whether he had fallen back from the position along the ridges above the Seille. I do not know why any one should think he would voluntarily surrender a position he selected in 1914 as the most strategical available in this region. I soon drew plenty of his machine gun fire and a few compliments from his artillery. He is still very much in front of us.

My mission accomplished I withdrew to our lines again without casualties. As we turned to the rear Red Adamson cursed the Jerries and advised them to look closely as it would be the last time they would see an American's back. I was out hacking holes in German wire until

the small hours of the morning preparing the way for a possible advance or a few raids.

It is a terrible answer Germany is getting. Our guns speak with the eloquence of the free peoples of the world in their defiance of Prussian autocracy.

September 13th. The Front. How many people, including David Bey, the Turkish Minister of Finance, have said that "A Military Victory in This War Is Impossible?" It may be that they know, but our cannon for miles and miles are certainly putting up a strong argument for the negative. All over the front things are what the French call "Animated," and I will let the word stand unmodified. There was a lull in the artillery firing during the morning but it was broken by the renewal of its thunder this afternoon. The quiet training sectors before Nancy, Toul and Commercy have sprung into fury, and from Switzerland to the North Sea the Hun has few places to rest his fatigued troops.

America is pushing in one of the most difficult sectors in France and though no news has come to us, we know our boys are advancing. We are holding the right pivot now but we will move up!

Two allied planes were brought down in our sector this afternoon. Three Boche planes attacked them, separated them and got them. I rested all day.

September 14th. The Front. Although our Division is doing its bit on the right of the first All American push, not until today did the news of its success reach us. No one shouted or went wild at the news of victory. It was only the extent of our gains that was in doubt. We knew our boys and our high command would make good. A curious world, and anxious allies, have waited a long time to see what would be the result of the first effort of American generals against the Huns. That curiosity should now be satisfied and the anxiety relieved. All day our big guns have pounded away intermittently at Jerry's positions. He has responded with a few of his heavies but has not done much damage. I learned that one of his airplanes dropped a bomb on a dugout over in the 326th sector, killing Captain Ham, a good friend of mine.

I go out in about ten minutes to spend the night over in the Germans' back yard. I hope I can get at him to collect for Ham. Those swine don't like to be "At Home" to my boys any more.

September 15th. The Front. I spent last night over with our neighbors and hacked up his wire a bit. The real horror of moonlight was an experience I had while crossing No Man's Land. As beautiful as ever he shone upon romantic lovers, he peered down on that

quiet waste with brilliant eyes. When we had reached the Boche wire he slid down the sky and silhouetted us perfectly against the skyline. We had to lie flat for an hour, fearful that we might be discovered, until the Lorraine hills reached up and hid his face. Starlights, sent up by Jerry, took his place when we began to move. Here and there Maxims poured out streams of death but they couldn't range us. Our Big Boys back of the lines boomed answer to the German "Hymn of Hate." All the time we kept slashing at his wire until, by three o'clock in the morning you could drive an army o'clock in the morning you could drive an army the offensive in this sector and treat us to an attack tonight or tomorrow. Come on over, old boy. We will make funeral arrangements.

CHAPTER VII.

The Tourist

N. B. On the night of September 15th, or rather the morning of the 16th I was wounded when the Boche drenched my position with mustard gas. I was not permitted to take any of my equipment to the rear with me when I was loaded on a truck and tagged for the hospital. My diary was left behind, hence the narrative of events covering more than a month.

I am indebted to my orderly, Private Forcier, of Fall River, Mass., for recovering the diary and keeping it safely until I rejoined my company in the Argonne. I immediately narrated my tour of the hospitals and took up the routine of the fight in the Meuse-Argonne sector.

Back to the diary.

When on Sunday night, more than a month ago, I wrote the opposite page, I did not invite any of Jerry's long range cannon to open fire on my habitation with gas shells. My remarks recorded there were addressed exclusively to his infantry. He took the liberty, however, to

gas the Bois de Facq about 1:00 A. M., a very unseasonable hour for such conduct. Unfortunately he selected a square on the map where I had two platoons hidden away to start his gassing. Everything was not against us when ill fortune arrived, for I happened to be awake when the first shell came over and its moaning whistle, as it ploughed through the air, told me too plainly it was filled with gas. Lieutenant Webster heard it too and we sprang out of bed together, for a small board shack is decidedly not bomb proof and the pup tents our men were under would not shed high explosives.

We sent the sentinels rushing through the darkness shouting "Gas! Gas!!" to awaken the men for they are so accustomed to shelling that explosions near by do not always bring them out of their blankets.

Red flashes here and there added blackness to the pitch dark night. Men were stumbling through the woods making their way to the flashlight with which I marked the entrance to the one small dugout anywhere near us. Shells began to fall in pairs and threes. It was with difficulty I made every man put on his gas mask, for the gas did not spread instantly and they thought there was none about. One man had a shell rip through his tent and the liquid gas splashed on him as it exploded. His experience saved me any further trouble. For-

tunately he had obeyed orders and had his mask on. I will never understand how sixty-four men crowded into the small eggshell masquerading as a dugout. Three or four shells that fell in the center of our group of tents furnished the necessary incentive.

I used to wonder when we first came to France, how a fellow could ever get hit when there was so much vacant space around for shells to fall in. But now I understand. Of all the vast area of this wide, wide world, the man behind the enemy's guns is only interested in that one little spot you stand on. I understand some of our officers are advocates of the theory that volumn of fire to stop movement of troops will win this, or for that matter, any war. But I am convinced that Hindenburg's hordes are fanatics on the theory of accuracy of fire to produce losses. This conclusion is the result of three hours and fifty minutes of minute observation.

When I had safely stored every man in the eggshell, I got down in the dugout but could not move away from the foot of the steps. I could hear the deep gutteral roar of the enemy cannon far off in the distance, and with it came the awful moaning whistle peculiar to gas shells. Sometimes I had no time to wonder "Where Will That One Land" for those that come near give no warning. The moan of its flight is

drowned in the bang of its explosion. Two or three times I thought our little wooden shack, with all of our worldly goods, had been blown off the landscape, but the first gray of morning revealed it still there. Shell splinters had chipped it up to look like wormy cypress but no direct hit had been scored.

A silence! Maybe it was over! Then that dreadful rumble in the distance and that moan like the wailing of a lost soul in purgatory, then the crash on the Decauville track near us! The Boche rained shells on us! When they exploded we could hear the liquid showering the leaves of the trees. The fumes were like fog! Our dugout had no gas curtains to protect the entrances. We had to take it!

Heads were aching badly now. Those who are experienced will tell you the nose clip and head straps of a gas mask are most uncomfortable after two hours of steady wearing. Some men removed the face cloth, keeping the nose clip and mouth piece in place. They paid for it.

Then a real pause came. I waited but a few minutes and ordered the men out of the dugout. We had cleared it for about two minutes when men were climbing trees trying to get out of the gas for it hugs the ground. One of them, in a muffled voice that always comes from a gas mask, called down,

"Smith, come up here, there's no gas here."

A clear Texas brogue without gas mask to hinder it, answered, "There ain't none down here now."

I shouted through my mask, "Fool, get your mask on. Because you don't die immediately you think the damn stuff is harmless." There was gas enough to wipe out half the population of New York City. When you have sniffed a little of it you can no longer smell it so acutely. A muffled voice answered me, "It's on now, Lieutenant."

Damn the Hun! That distant rumble came again and the wailing saints of hell rent the air again! There was a terrible crash in the midst of us and I had to give no orders to return to the dugout. No one needed a flashlight to mark its entrance. This time every gun must have been ranged to strafe us. Not less than seventy-five shells fell within a fifty yard square around us. He was using some high explosive and shrapnel too. Evidently he had played for us to come out of our dugout. He was too damned wise. Maybe we were dumb. Fortunately he did not make a direct hit with his H. E., or we would have been buried. Our dugout would not have stood it. Two or three gas shells did find us. For almost another two hours he kept us indoors wondering whether we would see the sun rise.

But the awful things in life, like the best, come to an end. Between four and five o'clock the last Boche shell came over. Having come too near to being caught by his shrapnel the first time his firing ceased, I waited about ten minutes before venturing out of our mite of protection. Gas masks were promoting headaches by the score and men were becoming sick from their own slobbering. They welcomed fresh air too, even that breathed through a box respirator. Some of them would have peeled their masks off immediately had not Webster and I kept constant check on them. Since no one had died they seemed to believe mustard gas harmless. Others remarked that their masks were pronounced good for seventy-two hours and they would wear out theirs if they remained in that area.

As soon as I came out of the dugout I had sent runners to Battalion headquarters to advise that I intended to evacuate my position. I wanted to know where I should go. All gassed areas, when mustard gas is used, are evacuated for at least eight days because of the tenacity of the stuff. It clings to everything. The enemy cannot occupy the position any better than we can so we leave it, unless it's vital. Our position was in support, so there was no danger.

Captain Fraser, my Company Commander, returned my runners with the information that

I could move my men to Battalion Headquarters as no gas had been thrown at them. This was surprising news to me. From the noise of bursting shells I thought the countryside had been "strafed" for twenty miles. The surprise was an agreeable one for the nearer the gasless area the sooner we would lose those pesky masks.

Every man's head was cracking with pain. It was a sigh of genuine relief that arose when we finally halted before Major Hawkins' dugout and I gave the command to remove masks.

Headquarters came out en masse to look us over. The gas we had brought out of the woods began to spread however, and we were soon isolated. We had to drag those damned masks on again. God, how we hated them, yet how thankful for them!

Sergeant Adams, our learned gas expert, gave us a swift once over and wisely pronounced us lucky and ready for duty. I insisted every man be sent to the rear for a bath and new clothing. The Major agreed with me and three trucks were ordered from Division Headquarters. The men were quite proud of their experience and enjoyed many witty remarks aimed at Jerry and his waste of energy and useless gas. I heard some of them remark confidentially to friends that they had not even put on their masks. I knew, of course, they were lying.

In the meantime I rounded up the doctor and the men lined up for his inspection and treatment, if any. Crotches and armpits were beginning to itch and sting.

"It's funny," said one man, "I believe it's that damned gas."

"Me too," added a buddy. "It's doing me the same way."

The itching and stinging became so general and so persistent, men began to slip away to examine themselves. They found little splotches of red appearing on their legs and under their arms. These the doctor tagged for the hospital.

For the love of Pete, what now? I looked inquiringly at Webster. "Do you feel anything itching about you?" I asked him. He answered in the affirmative. We discussed the irritated parts of our anatomy in whispers. In spite of this precaution we were overheard by Doctor White who directed us to disrobe for examination. We were duly tagged as the result.

"What the devil is this for?" I asked, pointing to the white card suspended from one of the buttons of my blouse.

"All gas patients go to the hospital," he replied.

"Splendid! Sure thing! Somebody bring a stretcher quick!" I spouted in an effort to be

funny. Webster and I both thought it a rather good joke but we were not sure who it was on. We had put our masks on in good time and did not think any liquid gas had splashed us. According to the dope that had been passed out to us we had no cause to worry. We didn't worry, we laughed. The men laughed with us. A day or two behind the lines, a little rest,—a ride on the "gravy train,"—that would be all.

. The sun came out. The fumes from our little area began to spread. Guards were put around it and a string of wire was added as a safety measure. The guards began to fall back. By the time we were evacuated the gas promised to drive our entire Battalion out of its position. (I later learned it did.)

I hooked on my mask and went back to my hut to look over the damage with our Regimental Gas Officer, Lieutenant Tilley. It looked as though giant wild boars had rooted up our camping grounds. Tents had holes ripped through them and one was pinned to the ground by a dud. I did not linger long. The place had no attraction for me. I was not allowed to remove any of my belongings. I had five dollars worth of candy in that shack too.

When I returned to Headquarters the trucks had arrived. We climbed aboard them and, thanking the doctor graciously, we moved out on the "gravy train."

Along the road for a mile horses and men were wearing gas masks. They were taking no chances. When mustard begins to spread safe places seem to disappear.

Not a comfortable ride, but a safe one, brought us to Millery and the 326th Field Hospital. We were conscious of the fact that the stinging was more pronounceed now but nothing had developed to cause any one any great alarm. With Webster I presented myself to the nearest doctor. He directed us to a bath house. That seemed sensible. There were others, yea, many others there before us. We fell in line. After watching the line dwindle away until we were about to step under the showers ourselves, we were switched to an officers' dressing room. There I was traded out of everything I wore, including a pair of forty-five dollar trench boots, for a little red and white calico bag and a pair of pajamas. I had a notion I was getting the worst of the horse trading and became inquisitive. I was informed that I was a wounded man and wore clothes that were filled with a deadly gas. If permitted to keep them I would endanger the lives of the entire staff of the medical corps. My money and such personal equipment as my watch I was allowed to put in my calico bag. This consideration I greatly appreciated, and said so.

We were next ushered into a room where

four barbers were industriously depriving military men of various and sundry grades of the use of a full complement of hair. Again we fell to in a lengthy waiting line. I bucked at the prospect of being decorated for the part of a convict but was threatened with all the penalties designed against those who do not conform to General Orders and so ceased my protesting.

Tied up at the rear of the line I managed to persuade a guy that seemed to have authority around the barber shop, to swipe me a pair of clippers. After entering a solemn agreement to cause as little anguish as possible, Webster and I decided to shear one another. I had no opportunity to look myself over after the operation, but judging by what I did to Webster, I am not inclined to become indignant toward those who disclosed marked symptoms of amusement when they looked at me.

Being thus peeled to meet the doctor's specifications, we were again shifted to the bath room. The shower was still in its infancy. It had not attained sufficient growth to spray a two inch circle. In fact it amounted to but little more than a weak stream of lukewarm water which we, with difficulty, persuaded to spread over our bodies. This bath was evidently calculated to save Uncle Sam excessive laundry bills, it was so strenuously insisted upon. I left at least two layers of front line breast works to be swished away through the drains.

Pajamas are not tailored for you at field hospitals. The pair I had proved that conclusively. It was once my ambition to have a pair of pajamas similar to them fit me, but I failed to make good in my growth. I reached down to roll up the trouser legs, and after rolling about ten inches discovered I was rolling the tail of the coat. A man should become embarrassed, however, only when there is a shortage of material; too much can always be adjusted. I confess myself the victor and the pajamas agreed to fit.

From my own point of view I was now ready to be examined and returned to duty. I had lost all track of the doctor. I could not reasonably expect him to give me much attention. He didn't have the time. Truckloads of wounded were banking up before every door. Our 164th Brigade had taken a swipe at the Boche along the Moselle. I did locate a few ex-coal miners, or what not, who wore the insignia of the medical corps. I addressed myself politely to one of them and told him if he would tell me where I should go next, I would walk up.

"Walk up?" he demanded. "Are you a patient?"

I informed him that if he wished to take my word for it, the answer was, no. If he believed in signs, however, I carried a white card in my calico bag which said yes, I was a gassed man. That excited him.

"My God, man, you can't walk! Get on that stretcher, and for the sake of all of our skins don't let the Major see you standing up!"

I argued that my case was not serious, that I had at least another hour to live; I was quite capable of standing up and believed I could walk.

"Don't be funny, buddy, it's orders," he said and with that I was toppled over on a stretcher and two broad shouldered lads posted themselves at the ends of it and I was transported two hundred yards to a long tent.

I had lost all paraphernalia that marked me as an officer, and I was pushed in with the boys from the rear rank to Top Sergeant. This suited me for a fellow meets the army's best when no one has to salute him. Did I shout, "I am an officer?" I should say not. I took my place along side a fellow whom I soon learned had about twelve years education on me and was as great a wit as Judge's best paid humorists. He was a private. Our National Army is like that.

I was with the meek and lowly on the cots, but, gentlemen, do not think our ward was shorn completely of the high and mighty. No, sir! By the grace of Pershing, we had an orderly. He wore a caduce which proclaimed him a member of the medical corps. If any one doubted that he was of more than average importance he

would put you straight on the matter himself. With ordinary observation you could read as much in his dark, forbidding countenance. He jerked soda at Bigby's in ye olden days.

Webster came in about noon. I tipped him off that we were not officers. He reminded me that this would be a fine opportunity to get three good meals a day. He had heard they fed well in the hospitals. It being the regulation hour for lunch we decided to announce our presence to some one in authority and let them in on the secret of our appetites. He of Bigby's being the only one in evidence, by much persuasion we attracted him to our end of the ward and told him we were hungry. We were subjected to a derisive survey. We were almost made to cringe. Then he of authority broke two hearts with four cruel words, "You Guys Don't Eat!"

"Don't eat? What the hell do you mean, don't eat?"

"No gas patients get anything but a cup of hot chocolate for forty-eight hours." Tie that, will you.

I shall always contend that was the beginning of all my illness. I was a well man up to that point. I immediately became faint. I charge every scar on my body to him who left Bigby's drug store to carry bed pans and hot water bottles to wounded soldiers in Uncle Sam's hospitals. Don't eat? Forty-eight hours? Hot Chocolate? Hell!

This was a program Webster and I resolved not to submit to. Somebody could be bribed. If not, then a kitchen could be raided. It had been done. In the afternoon we discovered another officer incognito, Lieutenant Lisenby of the 326th. I knew him first when our similar tastes brought us together in the parlor of a mutual lady friend. He proved to be a valuable find in the matter of procuring food. He was efficient to the very last degree. I could get away with a small sandwich, but he would come in with a whole loaf of bread and a jar of jam. The greatest obstacle in our way as pilferers was our desperate condition. When Bigby's ex-hired help reported our sallies from the ward, orders were issued confining us to our cots permanently. We were in the hospital against our will, however, and were not strongly inclined to observe such restrictions when there was no one looking. School kids again. There were some convalescent patients who were allowed to go to Millery. One of these, a few Francs and a Y. M. C. A., was the combination that produced the best results. Delicious grapes, walnuts and assorted cakes was our five o'clock menu.

I located two of my own men among the convalescents. This solved the whole problem of eats. That night after eating his own supper, Private Mozzo, of Company "E," 325th Infan-

try, fell in line for seconds and brought us a mess kit filled with the most tasty hamburger steak I ever ate. Now and then a doctor or the orderly would pass through and we would have to drag the hamburger under the covers. I know I ate twice as much that night as I would have had not the boy from Bigby's threatened me with starvation. Me not eat? That's the way I live. At eight o'clock the chocolate was served. I took that too,—camouflage!

With hunger appeased, I adjusted myself to cot and blankets, reflected that I was sleeping in a pair of pajamas, and went to sleep. I felt human.

Morning in the hospital brought no reveille with it. That one feature is the only thing I found about hospitals during my entire tour that appealed to me. I will except a nurse or two but I was in no condition to cash in on any romancing, when it came.

With our chocolate Bigby's ex-employee served us a rumor that we were to be evacuated to another hospital further back. I became uneasy for it began to look as though I would be transferred out of touch with my regiment and it was scheduled for relief. I might never find it. Not one doctor had ever examined me to determine the degree of my disability. I thought they were a passel of boobs to evacuate me without first knowing my condition.

A committee collected the tag that was pinned on me at the front and soon returned with it and an additional piece of card board that contained sundry bits of information about me, including this, "Transferred to S. O. S." You soldiers of the line know what a blow that would be to any doughboy. Who the hell wants to be in the S. O. S., and hear the front line outfits sing:

"Oh, mother, take in your service flag,
Your son's in the S. O. S.,
He's S. O. L., but what the hell?
He never suffered less.
He's weak and pale,
But that's from ale,
Or else I miss my guess
So, mother, take in your service flag,
Your son's in the S. O. S."

I asked to be examined and returned to duty but every one seemed to consider that matter closed. So, according to the Bigby boy's rumor, about three o'clock I was loaded in an ambulance and shipped south. Our foraging activities had fallen down and I had had but two cups of chocolate as sustenance all day. I was glad to get out of that tent.

I began to grouse about the turn of events the moment I was suspended in Prince Henry of Detroit's conveyance for sick and wounded. Two other lads were hanging above me and an-

other on my right. I voiced my opinion of a Boche who would throw over a carload of gas shells when he should have been asleep, and of hospital authorities who would send a fellow the gas didn't splash, to the rear.

"Here's Lieutenant Sirmon," a familiar voice spoke out, and I found myself with three of my men.

In discussing our cases I found that all of us had witnessed a substitution of drawn, burning skin where the itching and stinging had been. We agreed that there was but very little pain with it though and set to wondering what would happen to us at the next place.

It was fortunate that we were not seriously wounded. We experienced all of the sensations of ducking a German barrage in the hope of clinging to the thread of life, as we grabbed from left to right, front and rear, for something solid to hold onto to keep from being smashed against the side of the ambulance. The road was rough and that driver was certainly in a hurry. Somehow though, I found nothing substantial to hold to and still no fatal accident occurred. I lived in that doubtful state of safety until we turned into the court of the Justice group of hospitals near Toul. Then I was delicately lifted from the ambulance, which would have wrecked a well man less substantially constructed than myself, was suspended under-

neath a comfortable little two wheeled carrier, and gently wheeled to my ward.

For the first time I found myself in the presence of one of those devine heroines, a nurse. When I looked at her I wondered if the man who wrote "I'm In Love With a Beautiful Nurse" had ever seen her. He couldn't have. If he had he would have extracted one word from his title. When she came to my bedside and spoke to me in a sweet Virginia voice, I became convinced he would have substituted the word wonderful or marvelous or some other word expressing the superlative in nurses. I had not heard an American girl talk for a long time. This one was southern too, and I wanted her just to stand there and ask me questions, though it became embarrassing when she wanted to know what was wrong with me. I almost wished I had been badly wounded to enlist her sympathy. She was doubtful when I told her I did not think there was anything much the matter with me, and demanded my white card. After consulting it she advised me to remain quiet and stay in bed. Since I had no reason to do any differently I obeyed without argument.

The St. Mihiel drive had put a good many of our men in the hospital and the Justice group were doing a clearing house business. Jerry evidently used plenty of gas all along the line, for men were coming in gassed from every di-

vision engaged. Some of them had their eyes closed, and their faces were swollen, while others like myself, thought themselves unhurt.

This idea of mine was to be short lived. I wanted a magazine off the table and got out of bed to get it. Half way across the room I was halted by a sharp pain where some of the stinging had been. Further effort to walk brought more of them. I became very doubtful about my condition. Examination showed me a cluster of watery blisters forming and a wound about six inches long where the skin had broken. I got back in bed, and I was serious about it too. I decided there was a lot of good sense in the nurse's advice.

Webster walked into the ward just before the close of day. He was in less serious mood than I for the painful part of this hospital tour had not made its appearance on him. I related my experience to him and we recalled all of the lectures on gas we had had in an effort to account for my condition. No mention had ever been made of gas fumes burning a man through his clothing. I did not think any of the liquid had gotten to me. I knew what it would do. What lectures and gas experts neglected, experience had taught, however, and the conversation ended there.

Supper time came again. Put the emphasis on the word time. I had no appetite. My appe-

tite had me. The gentle nurse came into the ward and was reminded of the hour and the usual appointment we had with food, around six thirty. She was a wise nurse. She left the room and got out of hearing before she sent an orderly in to tell us we could not have anything but hot chocolate.

That was not funny. Nobody laughed. The fact is, word was sent out that a Bolsheviki uprising was about to take shape. A skinny doctor and a portly nurse appeared to inquire about the trouble. When he heard of so many full grown appetites he remarked we should be thankful that we were living. This bit of humor received about the same character of applause the king of England would have received at Sir Roger Casement's execution. This damned doctor back in Toul telling a bunch of hungry men out of that mess up front they should be thankful they were living! I still think he is exactly what we called him. He did not stay to learned that we preferred sudden death to gradual starvation. The threatened rebellion failed completely, and those who did not drink chocolate had no supper.

Breakfast at the Justice hospital was the same as supper, chocolate. I wonder where it got that name Justice. It about convinced me there was no justice. Dinner was much better, we had prune juice. We were about the sweet-

est bunch of patients that ever growled. The assortment of profanity was enlightening. I think some of it would have been new to an army mule. In the Justice hospital we were herded up on the second floor and couldn't even swipe anything.

It was a relief that defies all effort at expression that came with the announcement that we were to be transferred. Where were we bound for now? Nobody knew, but everybody guessed. Every hospital in France had a bid. Those around Paris being most desired soon dominated the rumors. We were going to Paris! Yes, we were! When we were wheeled down stairs, and ambulanced to train, we found it under orders to proceed to Contrexiville. We did not know anything about Contrexiville except that it was in France and was not Paris. A busy orderly took time to tell us that some kind of water came from there, he thought. He had heard it was very good water too.

When the last ambulance had delivered the last patient, the bell rang, the whistle blew and the train pulled away about twenty paces and stopped. I knew then it was a French train. This performance was repeated several times at intervals varying from one to ten minutes. Then the engineer got a good grip on the throttle and we rolled off down the track toward "somewhere else in France."

I do not know any one of the crew on that

train. I wish I knew them all and could command the armies of The United States long enough to decorate every one of them, from engine to caboose. The cars had the most comfortable berths for the wounded. Just when we had soured on the medical corps in its entirety, the nurses announced supper and I found myself confronted with a meal that would do justice to the Waldorf Astoria or any other inexpensive place. I have but one other possibility of such joy again. If Saint Peter lets me through the Pearly Gates, into the City of Gold, I may glow once more with a satisfaction and contentment as complete as that produced by the cook on that hospital train here in France. If I fail on my entrance exam before Saint Peter, I am afraid the supreme hour of eternity has passed for me. I wondered if it could be arranged for me to pass the crisis of my infirmities, convalesce, and then get a job on that train.

My wondering ceased when, in the middle of the night, we landed in Contrexiville and had the train-to-ambulance-to-hospital formula pulled on us. I made no observations that night. I put a willing body to bed. I do not know how well the just sleep, but they will have to go some to do a better job of it than I did. Anyone inspecting that night would have found half a hundred wounded men asleep, but smiling; all smiling. That supper was not forgotten even in the arms of Morpheus.

Both Webster and I were now aware of the cause of our shipment to the hospital. Neither of us could walk. I was housekeeping for the nastiest burn I had ever seen. It was so located that the horizontal was my most comfortable position.

Daybreak brought doctors, nurses and breakfast,—I mean real breakfast too. The doctors were pleasant doctors, and such nurses! If I had selected them myself I could not have done better. The unit in charge of our hospital was from Nebraska. It must be a great state. I don't see why Bryan ever left it. We were given every attention. Everybody was accommodating and congenial, from the orderlies to the Commanding Officer. Someone was around to take our temperature every hour, and for the first time the doctors interested themselves in the examination and treatment of our wounds. I had had but little need of treatment until this time, but the men who were suffering at Toul got no more attention than I did.

I had not had the use of a shaving kit since I left the lines. Other men had been equally as unfortunate so we presented a very rusty appearance. In the afternoon the Red Cross placed a kit on the foot of every bed. It contained everything necessary to a man's toilet and for more than an hour space in the washroom was at a premium. I prized this addition

to my equipment highly. I had been traveling with a small calico bag, a pair of pajamas and a smile until this time.

Following the good fairy who left us the kits, came another Red Cross lady taking cablegrams for the folks back home. She promised to tell them exactly what had happened to us, if we would tell her. I thought it advisable that they know I was not likely to kick off so a cablegram went home. I learned all of my men who had been shipped with me had received the same kindness. The Red Cross made friends of us all. We thank you folks back in God's country for your Red Cross drives.

The doctors were wonders. They made it possible, with the aid of a stout cane, for me to walk about the town a little. An efficient orderly provided me with a uniform and I went out in search of some of the famous Contrexiville water. I found it but I didn't like. I know that it is its curative properties that makes it famous. Nobody could like it. The city consisted chiefly of hotels, converted into hospitals, and jewelry stores. It is just a place for the rich to live, swim, drink and spend their money in peace time. I spent three dollars myself and here we have a war on. All I got to see was the center of town for my ailing sent me back to bed.

A man seems never more certain to get a

change than when he is absolutely satisfied. I know not one man wanted to leave Contrexiville. Since we had to be in a hospital we were anxious to stay where we were so kindly treated. But not us. We were tourists. There were many hospitals yet to be visited. There was, of course, a very good reason for evacuating us to the rear. The hospitals nearest the front have to be kept clear for emergencies.

The next morning we said goodbye. We had a comfortable hospital train out of Contrexiville. It was a tiresome trip to Vichy. We were on the road two days. We had not traveled far when we began to pass troop trains on their way north. Some division was going into the line for the first time. Their sympathy was aroused by the big red crosses on our cars and the wounded peeping through the windows at them. They would say, over and over, with marked emotion, "That's all right, boys, we'll give them hell for you!"

And just as often a chorus of voices, whose sincerity was beyond question, answered, "Go ahead, give them the works!"

Some of our negro troops were on a siding where we pulled up. They, too, were headed north. They were very curious about us.

"Is dey been to de front?" one of them asked of another.

"C'ose deys been to de front, nigger, how

you think dey got messed up lak dey is ef dey ain't been to de front?''

''Ah doan b'lieve dem Germans is gwine to do us dat way,'' boasted the first black.

''G'wan, nigger, you doan know whut dey gwine do to you. Dem white folks didn't think so nuther twell dey wus done mangulated lak dey is now.''

Our train pulled out and we heard no more from the blacks until we learned they forsook the trenches for a safer place when our barrage went over. I do not believe that was due primarily to lack of individual courage, but to the leadership of negro officers. The negroes of the 93rd Division have acquitted themselves well.

The second day, in the late afternoon, we arrived at Vichy. It is a watering place even more famous than Contrexiville. Its name is familiar. I have seen it on water bottles at home. It is said to have a summer population of more than one hundred and fifty thousand people and less than twenty thousand during the winter months. They claim a hundred and twenty-five hotels for it. I didn't count them, but that is the dope. Most of them are converted into hospitals now but some are open to the public, and the season was not quite over when we arrived. There were visitors from all parts of the world there. Serbian officers with their eyes almost obscured by the tiny visors that

shoot straight down from their tall caps, and Italians in gaudy uniforms and broad brimmed hats propped up on one side with a cock's feather. There were Czechs, Montenegrins, Slovaks and Slovenes with a dash of Spanish. As I have said, they were all there, including Chinks, Japs and a big shoe man from Rochester. Doubtless there were Butter and Egg men, or Gutter and Yegg men, from Chicago. At this particular time it is not easy for Americans traveling for the fun of it, to get to France.

Here we found the last hospital we were to use on this trip. As we were ambulanced through the streets and saw such wonderfully gowned ladies everywhere, we concluded the period of convalescence would be great. We were satisfied that we were forwarded.

CHAPTER VIII.

America at the Post of Honor

Once in the hospital, however, we did not find a semblance of the atmosphere we left at Contrexiville. We were assigned to a ward and put to bed. A doctor came in and examined me and marked up the score. Nothing at all was said or done about treatment. The skin, cooked by the acid, had separated from my flesh and I had a disgusting open wound covering many square inches of delicate parts of my body. The dressing put on at Contrexiville was almost cemented to the flesh. I wanted that removed, but it was just something I wanted. I spent the night awake for I was in constant pain.

Morning brought memories of the field hospital at Millery and the Justice group at Toul, where compliance with orders kept us from eating. Here no alibi at all was offered. We were unfortunately the victims of a common variety of inefficiency.

Being unable to get any one to help me remove the old dressings from my sore spots, I hobbled to the bath room to soak them off myself. This was bad judgment. I filled the tub with water and climbed into it. When the

water and acids reacted I thought I had sat down in a bed of hot ashes. I went through nearly an hour of excruciating pain before the last bandage gave way and left a ghastly area of exposed bloody rawness. Once back in my ward I put myself to bed permanently. The doctors told me nothing could be done for me until all of the acid had gotten out of my wound and it would be necessary to keep it open for a while.

Believe me our nurse was a hardboiled baby. She made me feel criminally liable for getting in the hospital. Lieutenant Webster was placed in the same section of the ward with me. His burns were not developing nearly as seriously as mine were. Lieutenant James, of Atlanta, Georgia, was also in our ward. He got his with the 5th Division at St. Mihiel.

But Vichy and the hospital had their compensations. The tension of the front was gone. We didn't even have the fear of an air raid. The only reminders of war we had were the crippled and wounded and the noise of a munitions plant near us. These were grim enough some times.

Time passed. Those days of waiting for my flesh to start mending were not joyous ones. I became weary of the news of more men coming in. Some of them I saw. Heads were bandaged, legs gone, necks braced, faces mutilated—terrible!

An old French barber would come up to shave me. He was full of humor but I could not get his jokes. He told them incessantly. He asked each morning if I did not know one for him. I knew several I think would have given him a kick, but my French was not equal to them. He persisted one morning and I finally asked him if he knew the difference between "la" and "la, la." When he gave it up and I told him it was "la" he laughed for two minutes. It was the best I could do in French.

I could not sleep well. I was bed worn and the pain seemed much greater at night. My restlessness increased too. The nature of my ailment kept me on my back. That was tiresome.

As each morning dawned an old French newspaper vendor passed underneath my window calling in a bass monotone "Petit Journal" but not so it could be recognized as that. It took me three days to find out what he was saying. He was followed by another announcing "Le Matin." The papers carried the "Communiques" from the front in English. We watched them closely. From them we learned that the Allies were driving all along the line and were everywhere successful. Nowhere could the Boche halt his battered columns. The day we had prayed for, had come. Superior reserve strength was now with the Allies for the first

time on the Western front. The genius of Marshal Foch was showing itself. Like a boxer he was battering his way forward, feinting here, ducking there, then a solid blow to the body and a cross to the chin; the enemy staggering, falling backward toward the ropes!

And America! In Flanders Fields with the British and Belgians; along the Vesle and east of Rheims with the French, and at the post of honor in the Meuse-Argonne sector before Verdun, was our own great army massed, Pershing in command! Everywhere our men were attacking with valor unsurpassed! Everywhere victorious!

This was great news, but it was general. Where was the 82nd? Where was my 325th Infantry? How were my own men faring? There was no answer to these questions then.

Days went by and there seemed to be no change in my condition, which was painful but not serious. I knew that wound would not heal immediately. I despised the thing. It looked like a plague of some kind. Webster could go out now. What promising stories he brought in! Great place, Vichy, he said.

They were off in the Argonne. On September 26th, our army had driven seven miles into the most difficult terrain in France. There a million men have died as the French and German armies clashed before Verdun. Four years of

bitter struggle for the most strategic stronghold in France. Five hundred thousand men Germany had bid to take it; five hundred thousand, and more, France had paid, and kept it! Now America was driving there, hurling her sterling youth against the supposedly impregnable positions of the enemy; plunging through to cut the German lines of communication and divide the Kaiser's armies. No rest for the enemy now!

Still no word came from the 82nd. I knew they were up there somewhere. They left the lines in Lorraine soon after I was evacuated. Where did they go? What part were they playing in the big show?

More days passed. Not many, but a few. They were long days. Then came the news that the Kaiser had asked terms for an armistice. The end was approaching! President Wilson answered to the German people. America would not negotiate with the Kaiser's government! Our Allies backed him up. Rid themselves of the Hohenzollerns before an armistice would be discussed. A bold pronouncement that, and a fatal one for the Imperial Wilhelm II. Worse for the Crown Prince.

We watched the papers closely now, even anxiously. The end seemed at hand sometimes, then doubtful. Anyway the German armies were falling back before Foch's incessant, ra-

pier-like attack. His strength was increasing every day. Our divisions were pouring into France. Germany's armies were dwindling. They were suffering heavy losses in casualties and prisoners. They must surrender soon! But when? To end the war before winter meant the saving of millions of lives and the preservation of whole, healthy bodies for millions of others. It meant the saving of billions of dollars to the peoples engaged. The winter would give Germany the opportunity to reorganize her armies and fortify another Hindenburg line on a shorter, more easily defended front. And who knows what political upheavals the winter might bring? What new Allies she might make?

The realization that we were so near to victory made life become very dear to me. I felt near home! I wanted the war to end. I did not want to go to the front again. Life was wonderful, wounds and all! I had learned to love the peacefulness away from the cackle of machine guns and bursting shrapnel. If they would only stop, then I would not have to go back into it. The passion with which I desired this shamed me. I knew I had become afraid. It did not seem possible that I could go through another fight and live. And to be killed so near the end! The Allies would win without me.

My wound began to heal. The soreness was

less acute. It was remarkable how rapidly it mended once it decided on that course. The doctors had said that would be the case.

I got the orderly to bring me a uniform. Not the tailored kind, but one Uncle Sam issued. It fit me like they usually fit every one. I was harnessed up, furnished a cane, and permitted to go out at last. The sunshine, the beautiful parks, the people, everything was wonderful! I could not stay out long that first day. I found I was not as well as I felt.

Convalescence had set in in earnest and I was permitted to go out every day. My strength returned rapidly and I was feeling fine. Every day was not sunshine. Some of them, in fact most of them, were cold and drizzly.

Around the corner from Base Hospital seventeen, was the Alhambra, popular cafe. It was there we went to drink "rum chauds." There the girls went to meet us. It was the clearing house for dates. Girls from everywhere, men from everywhere made each other's acquaintance at the Alhambra. There short lived romance began; there it usually ended.

I discarded my cane. I was feeling wonderfully. I was living joyously. I met officers from every outfit, convalescing at Vichy. Pity us hobbling about if one cared to, but we could tell the Justice hospital doctor and the cockeyed world, for that matter, that we were glad to be

alive. Sometimes, as I saw myself getting better and stronger, I became frightened. I would soon have to leave this. I'd go back to the machine gun and shrapnel. There is a wide difference! Deep in my heart I wanted to be with my regiment, sharing its dangers and its glories, but the stern reality of war was just a frightful thing! I visited the wounded men of my platoon who had been sent to Vichy with me. Some of them, in spite of the effort we had made to prevent it, had taken off their masks during the bombardment and were now almost dead, their lungs wrecked. Some of them, burned worse than I was, were still in bed. Two of them had raw scalps, their hair gone; one was probably permanently blind. Those were the boys I had worked with so earnestly at Camp Gordon; the men who had fought with me so fearlessly, at night, in the German wire. What, I wondered, would be their reward? It seems strange, but we were not down hearted. There together we talked of going back and giving Jerry hell again. And every man of us would have. We had a great reunion.

News dispatches showed our attacks slowed up in the Argonne. The Germans were holding on the Krimhild Stellung, whatever that meant. President Wilson was still writing open letters to Germany. Her people would not kick out the Kaiser and the Allies would not treat with him. The war kept on.

The Park hotel had a great bar. It, too, was a rendezvous for convalescent officers. I suppose every bar was, but the Park was a favorite. One evening I stopped in there with some friends I had invited to dine with me at a select place I had located. A fine crap game was in progress over a billiard table. That was regular, too. Some of my party joined for a few rolls of the ivory. Just before time for us to be on our way, I went over to the table and made a couple of bets. I lost the first one and paid up. I won the second one from the same man, a squint eyed shavetail. He tried to hedge out of it. In the argument that followed he tore up a twenty franc note and threw it on the floor, as evidence of his indifference toward money. A French Captain swiftly darted in and picked up every fragment of the note. The French regard their money with the same reverence we give to our flag. This was an insult to France! The Frenchman demanded a duel! His dramatic entrance interrupted a good American duel that was about to be put on by Squint Eye and me. We had to turn serious attention to the Frenchman who wanted pistols, or preferably sabres! We maintained the quarrel was mine, and arranged a duel. This didn't work; the Frenchman wanted to be my second. Lieutenant John Wilson, of the 5th Division, was given that honor, however, and the Captain had to leave the insult

to his "Belle France" to be avenged by me. Wilson promised faithfully to let him know the result. I never saw Squint Eye, the offender, again. He had vanished. I was satisfied.

When I waked up the next morning Webster's mattress had a big hole burned in it. This caused great excitement. An investigation was soon under way. It did not take long to develop the idea of a general carousal the night before. This could have been true, but wasn't. Major Wright of the Medical Corps, and Commanding Officer of the base at the time, was drastic. His wrath fell in all directions. He seemed to be a combination prohibitionist and fool, a frequent combination. He decided I was guilty of drunkenness, arson and insubordination. No evidence to that effect, but what did Major Wright need of evidence? Get this, you doughboys.

"I am proud of my uniform," he told me, "I am proud of my commission, and I am particularly proud that I am in the Medical Corps."

I agreed with him, every American should be proud of his uniform. His commission was one that commanded respect, and as a doctor his pride in the medical corps was justified. I admitted my own pride in my uniform, my more modest commission, and the arm of the service to which I belonged. He resented that for some reason.

"I know what you Infantrymen think of the Medical Corps. I've heard you talk about how we salute." (Pardon me while I laugh.) Then he got wild.

"Infantry officers are a disgrace to the army. You are unkempt, ungentlemanly woman chasers and drunkards! What," he asked, "would the people at home think of you?"

This should have made me laugh but it made me sore. I said that we Infantry officers, and many of the medical corps, did our war at the front and did not have the services of tailors to fit our uniforms, and the trenches were somewhat harder on those we had than the streets of Vichy were on his. As for what the folks at home thought of us, I suggested he read the home papers and find out. He decided nothing short of a courts martial would do for me. He was particularly gloating when he informed me I would be tried by a court composed entirely of officers of the Medical Corps. Why he thought that would frighten me I don't know. The average intelligence of doctors is very high. They are, as a rule, very just men too. I hadn't done anything. I had no idea how Webster's mattress got burned.

He went to the length of having charges made out, but when our conference was ended they were destroyed. Great soldier, that Doctor Wright!

Having escaped the Major's too efficient legal department, I was rapidly recovering in spite of the laxity in the administration of his medical department, which seemed to interest him much less.

Finally the day came. A number of men from my ward, including Webster, were ordered to report for examination. The hospital was filling rapidly. Space for the newly wounded from the Argonne was at a premium. I waited anxiously to know what disposition would be made of us. Webster came back. He had been assigned to the Service of Supply for six months. He said he had tried to get back with the 325th but it was impossible. All men who had been gassed were arbitrarily assigned to the S. O. S. That undoubtedly meant me too.

The next day Webster, and those who were examined with him, left. Where they went I do not know, but I was left alone. Not so good.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Captain Blanchard, of the Medical Corps and recently come from the 82nd, has been assigned to the staff at the hospital. From him I learned that my division was in the Argonne. Its losses had been heavy, particularly in officers. (Were they killed out drinking and chasing women, Major Wright?) Many of my close friends had "Gone West!"

Then came orders for me to report for exami-

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

A Literal Machine Gun Nest Shot Down in the Argonne.

nation. I had been in hospital for a month, lacking just a few days. I went down to appear before a board but only one Major, its chairman, was present. He didn't seem to need any help. He examined me. I still had a small open wound. He assigned me to class "B," which meant the S. O. S., for six months!

I said nothing but returned to my ward. I did some heavy thinking. The S. O. S., somehow, did not seem so objectionable now. The war would surely be ended soon. Six months in the S. O. S., meant that I would never have to go back to the front. Webster had tried to get back, but could not. I tried to convince myself that I could not either. That was not easily done. I knew in my heart that I was physically sound. I knew I was just as able to fight as I was the first day I landed in France. Then I was anxious to get into action and show the Hun the mettle I was made of. I had been through just a light touch of it since, and here I was afraid of it! No one could ever question my conduct. I knew I had twice been cited for bravery, and had been recommended for decoration for my conduct under fire. Life was wonderful! I wanted to go home again! The orders I had received insured that, I thought. Those orders had been issued after examination had been made by proper authority, and without any suggestion on my part. Why should I debate the issue?

Then conscience made its attack. My division needed officers thrice as badly as it did when we landed over here. Blanchard said sergeants and corporals were commanding platoons, even companies. I was well, and knew it. The doctors might give me the benefit of the doubt, but I knew I was equal to front line duty. Did I love my country or had I just been a boastful coward? I had been willing to die for Old Glory, if it became necessary, why not do it? Was I to hide this hour in my heart with shame, and show the world the decorations for which I had been recommended? It was now that America needed her men with guts! Conscience won!

I went to see Captain Blanchard about getting my classification changed from class "B" (S. O. S.), to class "A" (Front line duty). He suggested that I go back to the board that had examined me. I found the same Major there. I made my request.

"Why sure, if you want to go back, we'll send you," he said. It was done! Good! But was it?

My travel orders sent me first to Le Mans, as a replacement, with a request that I be returned to my own regiment, if possible. I was directed via Paris. I had two days of fast leave there.

It was my first opportunity to meander in the muchly advertised metropolis of fashion. Its reputation for spice and sparkle, with its wealth

of variety was substantiated. Nothing at all stood between me and two days of unrestricted pastime. It was a great idea to have the war fought in France.

Paris! If this war doesn't take me out in the last act I will go back. I don't think there is anything else like it. Its stately beauty is evident in every section. It is so rich in historic romance and art I did not attempt any serious observation. I turned to its frivolous offerings.

A book would not suffice for the complete record of those two days' events. The Follies Begeres, which disputes with New York the original Follies, had an English-American cast, so I chose it for the first night. I had butted in with two American nurses and dated them for a show. I should not have taken them to the Follies Begeres. It is different, in many ways, from anything I had seen. In addition to the choice in seats common to our theatres, it has a wine garden and a promenade. A ticket to the promenade entitles you to no seat at all, but you may stand up or walk around at will. It is used freely by girls soliciting their room rent.

When we were leaving I thought a panic had been caused at the entrance. It was only the noise of young girls rushing from one American soldier to another saying, almost frantically.

"You come weez me! You come weez me!"

I was between the two nurses, but that did

not phase the girls at all. I was solicited and tugged at several times, and one painted, gaudily dressed young animal pulled this one.

"You come weez me, American girls no good to you! You come weez me!"

Not knowing anything better to say or do, I kept silent and kept walking. I could not think of anything to say to my companions for some time.

I marveled at the Australians. They seem to take Paris lightly. In fact I think they take everything lightly. Whether lightly or otherwise, I am convinced they take whatever they want.

I was at the American Bar. That's another place in Paris. There were about ten of the boys "from down under" at a table, and getting fairly well along with their drinking. Suddenly one of them shouted "Kangaroo!"

Immediately they began hopping upon the tables in a manner imitative of the animal whose name had been called upon. Then from table to table they chased one another, shouting all kinds of South Sea babble. Tables and chairs gave way under the assault and soon the place looked like a young cyclone had passed through it. The damage was slight, however. The game, whatever it was, was ended, order restored and hilarious drinking resumed.

Physically the Ausies, as some call them, look

much like our westerners. They do not act unlike them either.

Then, with Gay Paree behind me, I became "just another replacement" at Le Mans. There the grim business of war moved on relentlessly. Theirs was the problem of breaking up new divisions into replacement units, assembling convalescents, and hurrying them into the vacant files of front line units. Many are the men, members of proud divisions, who curse the fate that befell them at Le Mans. No sentiment attached to the job there.

The afternoon I arrived the 31st, made up of Georgia, Alabama and Florida National Guard units, marched in. I knew it well. A justly proud outfit it was. At the head of the leading Battalion marched Frank Harrington, Clark Bush, Henry Schwatts and Charlie Graddick, school mates of mine seven years ago. I was overjoyed to see them, but could only say "hello!" On they marched. I do not know what became of them. I did not see them again. Their division was smashed and scattered all over France.

Wounded men were no novelty at Le Mans. The second day I was put in charge of a whole train load of them and headed for the Advance Zone. I was instructed not to let them leave the train. Fat chance I had with that humorous, war-hardened gang of Yanks. They got off by

platoons at every stop. When the train would start again they would come piling on, usually catching the last three cars. Somehow they would all find room. I was relieved when we reached Corps Headquarters and somebody else took over responsibility for their safe conduct to the front.

We took trucks from Corps Headquarters forward. I had twenty-five men for the 82nd. We arrived at our headquarters in the middle of the night, October 17th.

There I got the first news of the terrible fighting our division had been through. The 326th's fierce assault and capture of the heights of Cornay. Its recapture by the Germans and the counter attack of my own battalion, the 2nd, of the 325th Infantry, which swept over Cornay and on to the river Aire before St. Juvin.

The morning of the eighteenth I started hiking to the front where my regiment was engaged. I had no gas mask, no side arms, no hat. I was just going up. I could find those things up there. Dead men had them.

On the road I saw many negroes working. They were units of the 92nd Division that had been taken out of the fighting line and converted into temporary labor battalions. Their complete collapse at the front must have come as a great surprise to some people.

I talked to one of them, a plain old Georgia

negro. I asked him why they had broken under the noise of our own barrage, as I had heard they did. He answered:

"White folks, you knows no nigger aint gwine t' do nothin' fo' no other nigger. Dey had nigger officers over us an' dar wunt no white folks at all around. We was jes' natchully scared. Ef we'd a had some white officers, we wouldn't run, no suh. But jus' lak I said, no nigger aint gwin' t' do nothin' with no other nigger bossin' 'im."

Knowing negroes, I got his point.

At Varennes I found my orderly, Forcier. He told me he had this diary put away safely. It represents the most tedious undertaking of my life so that was great news to me. I met some of our wounded there too. Captains Jack Cozine and Clark Howell, and Lieutenant "Pinky" Whelchel, all side kicks of mine. None of them were badly done up. There was a thrill in their voices as they described the battles of the last few days. They had stormed the heights of the Argonne, fought through its forests, crossed the river Aire at night, and marching up the St. Juvin-Fleville road to "Jump Off" again, found themselves flanked by enemy machine guns. They told me how gallant Colonel Whitman had stood at the already famous "Bloody Cross-roads" and maneuvered his regiment as though it was a company, beat the enemy back,

and went into position on time. How that suave gentleman, Major Thomas Pierce, had become a bulwark of morale, commanding his battalion with the same calm you would find on the parade ground until he fell apparently mortally wounded. As he lost consciousness he gave his last command coolly. "Tell Captain Melton he is in command of the 3rd Battalion." Great courage that! I heard at Varennes how five of our Captains had been killed, and my close friends, Lieutenants McLeod and McCord, had fallen bravely performing their duty. I was glad now I had come!

The front lines were still ahead of me. The roads were crowded with heavy ammunition and supply trucks. Above me were airplanes. Everywhere the hillsides were belching the flame and steel of cannon intermittently. I was back in the war again.

I turned again to make my way forward. At Fleville I found our Brigade Headquarters and our field kitchens. Here were some of the boys from my own company. Here I learned that our Infantry, as the cook put it, were "still running them" about a half mile over the ridges. I found good old Joe Brown Connally, of Atlanta, almost out from gas and exhaustion, but still sticking with all his great heart. I once heard him called rich and opulent, a useless ne'er-do-well. What a hero I found him at Fleville!

It was rugged country west of us. Paralleling our advance was the commanding promontory, the Argonne Forest. Winding its way along the toes of its protruding ridges, was the river Aire. A narrow valley and ridges, with treacherous ravines between, led up to the whaleback that lies between the Aire and the Meuse, to the east of us. It was across these ridges and ravines our troops had been fighting. Every crevice, every depression, every bush and tree, was hiding its machines of death, and its men, with nerves strained, shocked to the breaking point, awaiting the next command forward. Out of these fortresses of nature, out of his own best trenches, protected by their masses of barbed wire and mines of dynamite, the American doughboy had driven the Germans back. Now I found him waiting for the word to spring forward again.

On the right of us the 327th regiment of the 82nd was in difficulties, and next to them the gallant 42nd Division was having its troubles. We could tell the fighting was stubborn, but it never ceased. The Americans were advancing. That wing must be brought up!

I spent the night of October 19th, twenty feet underground, in a dugout that was Headquarters for the 325th. I went over the maps with Colonel Whitman and got the location of our troops and the enemy positions in the sector.

Our regiment was sticking out like a sore thumb with its right flank exposed to the enemy. We were holding and waiting for the 327th to come up while the German poured his high explosive and shrapnel over on us, and ripped up the ravines with his machine guns. The Colonel was as calm and as chipper as he would be on parade. He was serious of heart, but smiling of face and cheerful of manner.

My Battalion was in the support position. I joined it before dawn, the morning of the twentieth. Major Hawkins was still in command. He was not as worn or haggard from the wear and tear of fifteen days of offensive fighting, as most of our officers were.

I was assigned to duty as Battalion Adjutant, Pinkussohn having been sent to the hospital. I visited each of our companies. They were mere skeletons of the organizations that entered the Argonne some fifteen days before. Company "G" came in with 328 men. It now had 41. That is a fair example.

My Company Commander, Captain Young Fraser, was still on hand with his two hundred pounds of fighting Georgian. Blondy Flournoy, the boy nobody ever licked, had Company "F" on edge for another melee with the Hun, and Alex Fawcett, my old boxing partner at Camp Gordon, had succeeded to the command of Company "G" and was making enviable history for himself.

There were no trenches now. Each man had his own little "fox-hole" dug into the hillside. The constant rains made them more like hog wallows.

As I was crawling along the St. Georges-St. Juvin road, the Boche began shelling us. I hugged the protection of the road bank. There was a hit on the slope above me. The explosion almost deafened me; dirt rained down upon me and more than half a man's leg fell within my reach. Even a lull is terrible here. Machine guns pepper us intermittently, their bullets cracking over our heads at intervals all day.

Airplanes are above us constantly. Sometimes they move in great squadrons; sometimes a single combat plane is out scouting alone. Our men complain that the Germans have our war birds beaten out of the air, but I doubt it. Ordinarily I can't tell which are our planes and which are not. I imagine that is true of a great many others. One came along today rather low and some of our riflemen fired at it. I know that one was German. He retaliated by dropping a handful of grenades and spraying us with his machine guns.

In the afternoon I saw an air fight above us. Two planes maneuvered beautifully, high up in the heavens. Now and then as they swerved, the sun would catch their wings and they would flash, silvery bright, like giant heliographs sig-

nalling to us below. Then one of them would get position and tiny threads of smoke (tracer bullets) would shoot out, seemingly lacing the planes together momentarily. A pause, and then the rat-tat-tat-tat of the machine gun would come down to us. Then one of them started down, circling, circling, losing altitude with every turn. It seemed to be in a side spin, if that's the term, and its pilot unable to come out of it. His motor was making a peculiar screaming noise, and as he drew nearer his doom, the great ship looked like a wounded bird, helpless, crying out in its pain. It was never righted, and at terrific speed it crashed into the walls of Campigneuille. The plane was ours.

CHAPTER IX.

The Eloquence of Artillery

October 21st. The Front. I hope I can keep this batch of notes I am making until I get that diary again. I've got some job catching up with those hospital days.

We relieved the front line Battalion last night. The relief was accomplished without casualties, but it gave me heart failure several times. Most of the carrying parties bringing food and ammunition come up at night. Knowing that the Boche "strafe" the ridges over which we must pass, with machine gun and artillery fire, in the hope of catching parties coming to the front. We're kept on our bellies half the time to let bullets and shell fragments go by. Brother, some of them shook the earth for miles, it seemed. I was literally lifted from the ground by one that exploded near me. He sprung a new one on me, did Jerry. He pitched over shells that exploded three times in succession. I don't know which detonation does the damage.

We are on the reverse slope of the ridge above the ravine Aux Pierre. Somewhere, just over the crest, is the enemy. Just when we will move

over to his side nobody knows. We can't until the 327th catches up.

Our men remind me of prairie dogs. They sit up on the edge of their fox holes and look around, but the whistle of a Big Bertha sends them scampering out of sight.

Our P. C. (post of command), is under the hillside, supposedly safe, but when the big ones come over, and the earth showers down about us, I begin to doubt it seriously.

October 22nd. The Front. We were subjected to heavy shelling during the night. But I got some good sleep at that. I had to make two inspection tours along the line of fox holes in the darkness too.

Today has been lively. The Boche were pitching up mortars and dropping them on us. He had the range on Company "G" and we had to pick off one of his crews. He likes to sprinkle us with machine gun bullets too. In the afternoon aerial activity is plentiful. About five o'clock I counted fifty-six planes in the air at one time. A German pursuit squadron got behind five of our observation planes and made them sizzle for a few minutes, but our fellows managed to get away and back across our lines. They came down low and the anti-aircraft guns helped to cover their retreat. I heard plenty of criticism of our aviators for "running away." Our men don't realize those planes

were sent out for information and photographs of the Boche positions and were probably high-tailing it back with them. Furthermore, they are not built to do battle with pursuit planes.

October 23rd. The Front. Our grave diggers do a pretty good job, but they don't get them all! In clumps of bushes and in the gullies, the dead Boche are lying about and smelling terribly. They look worse. The human body is a horrible thing when life is gone and the soul departed! It becomes just a rotten thing that smells! We find them by machine guns, and some on the field with rifles still clasped in their hands. Others are just dead. It makes me wonder why we war with each other. There is no nationality among the dead whose bodies I see lying about.

A German plane came over this afternoon and flew along just above our line and marked our position by a stream of smoke. We were promptly strafed for half an hour. Bad medicine, these German cannoneers.

We were relieved during the night and moved back into the reserve position. We were shelled a couple of times, and machine guns raked the high spots once, but we suffered no casualties. It's a big night's sleep for me.

October 24th. The Front. Even in reserve

here we are not so far from the front. Our regiment has been cut to pieces. There is no more than a full strength battalion left of it. Many of the men who are left are pretty badly worn out. Dysentery is prevalent. They are still more than a match for Jerry though. He's in much worse shape.

A batch of mail and papers came in today. The end of this carnage seems to be near. A few more thrusts and the German army will crumple completely. Hindenburg and Ludendorf no longer have those rested divisions to throw into the breach. They have pulled Austrians over here to help them stem the tide of increasing Allied victory.

We are living in scantily covered dugouts with a little straw spread on the ground for comfort. It is remarkable what one day's rest will do for the men. Relaxation and sleep restores their energy quickly.

The German big guns rocked us several times during the day. He can't quite get under the hill to us though.

October 25th. The Front. Another day of rest. It is evident now that we will be relieved before we make another jump forward. When it will come we do not know, but fresh divisions are moving up behind us. Another real battle is to be started. Airplanes and artillery, with

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

Chatel Chehery from Heights of the Argonne. From this Point I Watched the Bombardment November 1st.

the distant rattle of machine guns up front has been the battle order of the day.

The 327th seems to be unable to come up on our right. I heard today that its Commanding Officer, Colonel Ely, had said in one of his messages that he was held up by machine gun fire. The story goes that Pershing sent substantially this order to our Division Commander:

"Relieve Ely at once, and if you have any other officers who think Americans cannot advance against any German defense, relieve them also."

Whether true or not, it makes a good story. Sounds like Pershing.

October 26th. The Front. The rest in reserve is over. We spent a quiet day and then moved up into the support position tonight. The relief was accomplished without mishap. We even failed to receive any attention from Fritz's artillery. We do not mind the support position so much. We get a little long range machine gun fire down the ravine but the bullets are well spent before they arrive in our neighborhood. They don't do any damage. Everything the enemy attempts now is at long range. It's a war of defense and delay with him now. I don't think he has a good attack left in him.

October 27th. The Front. Keeping under cover is our biggest job here. We don't do that

well. We get frequent shelling. When it comes we scamped for cover, but everybody is out again as soon as it's over.

I am becoming battle-worn again. The peaceful days of Vichy seem far back in history; sort of a myth. I was far more afraid of the war there than I am here.

I saw another great air fight this afternoon. Just two planes fought it out above us. It was amazing how both planes were maneuvered. I watched them climb, dive, duck and swerve for several minutes, until one of them fell, much as a leaf would fall, slowly to the ground. It dropped just outside the walls of Champigneuille. This time it was the German who lost.

> Note: I was looking through the Smithsonian Institute recently. In the aviation section a bullet riddled Spad plane, used during the war, attracted my attention. It has seven victories to its credit. The pilot's name and the date and place of each victory is given. It is a coincidence that it was undoubtedly Lieutenant Jones, piloting this same Spad 15, who brought down his enemy in the fight mentioned on the 27th. The plane's record shows, "Lieutenant Jones, enemy plane, above Champigneuille, October 27th."

October 28th. The Front. We are expecting a relief every hour. All day we thought it

would come but it did not. If they can't stop the war on the present lines, then let us get back and fill up the vacant files in our division and come back to maul Jerry some more. Winter is coming. We've got to win before it gets here or meet a reorganized German army next Spring.

We came up into the front line again tonight. The enemy must have been wise to our relief for he gave us plenty as we came up. It continues to be a mystery to me how a battalion of men can come through so much fire and nobody get hurt. We had to pass through comparatively heavy shelling and some spurts of machine gun fire, but all company commanders report not a man scratched. It certainly costs one hell of a lot of money to kill a man in war.

October 29th. The Front. The front line again! We are just holding it. Nobody has tried to take it away from us yet. The Boche seems to have lost his taste for disputing ground with us. The untrained Americans he scoffed at have shown a capacity for fighting that has appreciably tamed his offensive spirit. It must be disconcerting to discover that we are not red skinned, do not wear feathered head gear, and have no tomahawks in our fighting equipment. That is the way we were cartooned in his newspapers.

We have more rumors of relief, but no troops have appeared for that purpose.

October 30th. The Front. Just a morning like yesterday's. Whether in training camp or the front lines, war can get damn monotonous. When it is lively it sparkles though.

In the afternoon an order came. Some order too. No mistake about that. It is filled with possibilities. The 77th and 80th Divisions, two of them, are relieving the 82nd tonight. That is, they are relieving all of the 82nd except the front line units, and that means us. Our battalion will be left alone to hold back the Hun until tomorrow night. In the meantime, says the order, "It Will Be Considered a Point of Honor Not to Surrender a Prisoner." In other words, we must die right here in our tracks, if necessary, to cover the movements of our troops coming up for another plunge toward Germany. We will do it. Tonight we are alone. Our division has left us.

October 31st. The Front. Great day this. (It has become yesterday now.) Sitting up front, knowing that, if the Boche should take a crazy notion to attack, we could expect no help and were bound by honor not to surrender a prisonor, we waited all day. He shelled us considerably but did not come over in person.

At midnight a battalion of the 80th came to

relieve us. I thought then, and am convinced now, that this will be the finishing blow. We were to be off the roads by 1:30 A. M. Our bombardment would start then.

When the relief was accomplished I started to the rear, and at that precise moment the Germans put over a healthy barrage of their own. They must have had a suspicion that something out of the ordinary was taking place for they had picked at us all evening. It is fortunate that his last effort was not a half hour earlier when our men were spread around with the business of relief in progress. We sprawled on the ground. This thought ran through my mind: "Am I to be killed at the last moment?" I was not afraid, but mighty uncomfortable. I have said it did not last long. While it did last it was plenty hot. When it stopped I wasted no time in getting the Headquarters Detachment on its feet and moving.

We had reached the ridge above the Fleville-St. Juvin road when the Boche started raking it with his machine guns. We spread out on the ground again. I will never forget my feelings. I prayed. Fixed in my mind was the thought that this drive will force Germany to an armistice. The negotiations have gone too far, and the troops massed for the attack was evidence that the Allies meant it to be a decisive blow. The chances of our not getting into action again

are better than even. Fifty yards away I would descend the clifflike hillside to the road below. That meant safety, and I thought, home! So I prayed for the German fire to cease for just ten seconds and I would say "Hello, Miss Liberty!" some time soon.

The firing did stop and we made the road and its protection. I lined up my men and said to them:

"At 1:30 our artillery is going to begin the heaviest bombardment in history on the German positions. They will likely retaliate. Their fire will be concentrated on this road if they do. Our destination is the heights above Chatel Chehery. One-thirty is an hour and a half from now; Chatel Chehery is about five miles from here. I am going to be there by then. If any of you get tired and can't keep up, just fall out and join us there in the morning. 'Squads left, March!' "

The roads were jammed with troops, artillery and vehicles of every kind, but we kept to the sides and I mean we kept moving. It would not be funny to be caught in the fracas that promised to develop with no part to play but dodge high explosives.

At 1:30 we were at the foot of the hills at Chatel Chehery. I expected to hear the racket start, but it didn't. Painfully we climbed up, up, and up until we reached the summits of the Ar-

gonne where we were to spend the night and today. It was after two o'clock and there was still almost an oppressive silence. I wondered what was wrong. I had heard we had about three thousand cannon in place for the bombardment. The hour was past, why didn't some of them shoot?

I was standing on the heights looking eastward. I could have seen almost to the Meuse river in daylight. It is a country of rolling hills that spread out below me.

At 2:30 the first gun was fired. It was quickly followed by another and another. I could see them flashing from the hillsides far and near. A wonderful point of observation was mine! Battery by battery our guns joined in, increasing the thunder until within a moment's time the whole region was shaking in accompaniment to a monster rumble that was steady and unceasing. The gigantic roar that was shaking the very bottom of the great Argonne promontory, was broken by the individual bark of the guns being fired near by!

And to see it! The whole heavens were lighted and were aquiver with the shimmering light from the flashes of cannon. For many miles in every direction the hills were spitting streams of fire. Blades of flame swept along their sides as batteries fired their guns in salvo! An inferno, yes,—but a beautiful one! Thousands of

cannon, all pouring out their missiles of destruction, as gun crews, sweating and swearing, kept them firing at maximum capacity. Surely Germany cannot withstand this!

What a lesson was taught me in those brief hours! What a lesson the world should learn from this! What punishment a free people can mete out to its enemy when aroused by unjust attack! Free America was speaking! Mighty America was speaking! I trembled with pride! My America was speaking! And Germany must listen! I stood enthralled while the morning hours passed. I could not move while the great drama unfolded.

At five o'clock this morning our artillery barrage lifted and our infantry jumped off. By noon news was back to us that the Boche were retreating so rapidly our doughboys were being loaded into trucks to overtake them. What a glorious day! I know the end must be near. Now I can sleep; I must sleep, and damn me, I will sleep!

CHAPTER X.

Peace.

November 1st. Chatel Chehery. This thing must get straightened out. I have my red backed diary in my possession again and have a lot of copying to be done. When I said I had to sleep on the first, I meant it. I pitched a pup tent, crawled under it and waked up November second. I used most of the first of November finishing up the events begun October thirty-first. I am going to start monthly with today, which is,

November 2nd, Chatel Chehery, and thereabout. I spent today grabbing news from every passerby, trying to follow those flying doughboys who are chasing Heinie back toward his much beloved "Vaterland." Our artillery has moved up, too, and is pursuing him with H. E., and shrapnel.

Our division is somewhere further back. Tomorrow we will move back into the training area, get replacements and then—(?).

I have just gotten in from a party with a gang over in Ste Menehould. Some light drinking and heavy singing was all. Ste Menehould is

too close to the destructive fireworks for much gaiety. I can never sing without wine. No one has ever told me I sing well with it, but I always think I do. "The Mademoiselle From Armentieres" has just about captured the last one of "Sweet Adeline's" boy friends who get teaed up and sing. We sang the whole hundred verses. Some time there was a verse to a girl from Gay Paree, and there was another from Bar le Duc whose romance with one of our doughboys terminated most unfortunately. President Wilson's notes and the dash of our men toward the Rhine has put a new thought into the repertoire of the A. E. F. It was sprung on me tonight. Rather optimistic and comforting at first, but disconcerting in the end.

"Oh, we'll all be home by Christmas
Eating our Christmas pie.
Oh, we'll all be home by Christmas,
If we don't I hope I may die.
We'll all be home by Christmas,
Drinking our Christmas cheer.
Yes, we'll all be home by Christmas,
But nobody knows what year."

November 3rd. Septvigny. A truck ride (Yes, we rode) brought us to Septvigny. It is just another French village, no matter how you pronounce its name. It has the customary

flock of geese waddling down its cobblestone streets, the ducks play in the little stream just below the town. The villagers vie with each other in the size of the manure piles banked high beside the front doors. I have heard it said that upon the proposal of marriage by a young man, the fathers compare manure piles to determine whether it will be a profitable match. As I have said, Septvigny is another French town.

We unloaded late and I billeted my men in the second story of a smelly barn. Three mules, two cows with as many calves, a cage of Belgian hares, and ducks, chickens and geese occupy the first floor. I joined Major Hawkins in a peasant home. It is comfortable. Any billets are mansions compared to muddy fox holes. I hear drill starts tomorrow.

I am to be made a Captain. Thanks. I will command Company "G."

November 4th. Septvigny. It cannot be said that my actions between six and seven A. M., were voluntary. Sunny France has become weary, dreary and cold. The weather is conducive to sleep, but not inviting to work. If I had been consulted about the schedule for today I am afraid I would have let sympathy for my men dictate my program, and I would not have had them splashing about in the mud and muck in a futile effort to do close-order drill. I know

how Robert Service's "A Song of Winter Weather" was inspired now. The last verse, or stanza, belongs right here.

"Oh, the rain, the mud, and the cold,
The cold, the mud, and the rain!
With the weather at zero it's hard for a hero
From language that's rude to refrain.
With porridgy muck to the knees,
With sky that's a-pouring a flood,
Sure the worst of our foes
Are the pains and the woes
Of the rain, the cold, and the mud."

The fighting 325th, the glorious victors of recent battles, found ourselves plodding through the most minute details of the hated "tin-soldiering," like the newest of recruits. Officers so lately snuggling by the most humble privates in shell holes, were onec again bedecked in their Camp Gordon dignity, the mere drillmasters of training days.

November 5th. Septvigny. Replacements are coming in to fill the ranks made vacant in the Argonne. I took command of Company "G" today, and some fine looking men from the new bunch were assigned to it. I hate to call a man a replacement. It makes him too cruelly just expendable personnel. I sometimes glimpse a vision of the once happy homes now

grief stricken by the loss of the boys whose graves, marked by little wooden crosses, are scattered over the battlefields of Europe. A boy falls, many hearts are shattereed; mothers, fathers, wives, sweethearts, brothers and sisters bereaved; sometimes children made fatherless! That goes for the enemy too, but we are taught not to bother about that.

News from the front has it that our doughboys are still pushing the Boche back toward the Rhine. The President is still publishing notes and waiting for the Kaiser to be kicked out by Germany. This war started fast enough, but it seems damned hard to stop it. Looks like we might be back in the lines again soon. Rumor says we will help take Metz. O. K., let's take it.

November 6th. Septvigny. There are certain difficulties that cannot be overcome in life. Some of them have to be battled constantly. Most persistent of them all is the leaving of warm covers on wintry mornings. I was thawed somewhat today by pride in my new responsibility as Company Commander. Rain kept us off the drill field during the morning. With the satisfaction that has come with promotion there is a distinct pang that hurts around the heart when I think of leaving the boys who have seen me through it all up to date. No better, braver

bunch of boys ever fought than my old platoon of Company "E."

In the afternoon I got well acquainted with Company "G" through three hours of good drill.

November 7th. Septvigny. Surprises are frequent, but over here they usually bring a house full of gloom twins along with them. An agreeable surprise, such as the cancellation of today's drills, is a bird of such rare plumage it should have its mention in orders for daring the wrath of those who, for the last week, seemed bent upon "Squads Righting" us to death. Tired and aching muscles are grateful to somebody, but our knowledge of those in authority has us skeptical about where our gracious thanks should be bestowed. It must be the work of that hard looking baby, Campbell, who joined us for the Argonne. Even the heart that so far relented could not soften entirely and we had to march out for a two hour workout. That was six hours off the usual schedule and was just a limbering up exercise. I visited a sour old frog, the town mayor, to get a better drill ground. He doesn't seem to be quite clear as to whether we are allies of France or Germany. I did not get the new drill field.

November 8th. Septvigny. After a day of enjoyable work, it is hard to go back as far as the morning to start recording it. The day was

just as clear as twelve hours could be, and it was just cold enough to be invigorating. With a day of rest behind me I could not have been given a more pleasant job than the training of good, earnest, willing American soldiers. From Reveille to Retreat we worked, and I ask forgiveness for the man who says we did not put everything we had into it. Such a day is a tonic for a man who loves men and gets a kick out of training them, but I hate the work these men are trained to do. Surely it is noble to fight for the flag. But how much more wonderful to have a world with flags that need no warriors. Is it possible? I think not. I am afraid we must always train men, discipline men, love men,—then watch them die!

November 9th. Septvigny. What do I care for the trials and horrors of war when, after a day of routine drills, I can step into an evening of champagne and the company of a pretty girl? Cecile is her name. Her mother always sits in the room and reads a book or sews when I am around. After gesticulating much French, and articulating a little, I put across the idea that we handle such matters differently and infinitely better, in America. I would like to be alone with Cecile. I assured her I could then demonstrate the cave man methods we employ in our romancing. She insisted that I was at liberty to proceed, but I hesitated. Not wanting to miss out on anything so fervent as I had built up my

wooing to be, she asked her mother to leave us. She left. I was then asked to make myself worth the trouble I had put them to; show her this mysterious lovemaking we did when alone. I was stumped a bit. It seemed like a rather cold way to start. I didn't hurry. Step by step I tried to develop momentum and met with encouragement at every change of pace, until I madly swept her into my arms and pressed a long, lingering, but none the less ardent kiss upon her lips! When I released her (which I realize was a mistake) she asked in pretty French, "What next?"

When I answered, "That is all!" she broke into hilarious laughter, called her mother, described everything to her and then both of them laughed and informed me there was no occasion to have mother leave the room for anything so tame as that!

Boy, what a date!

November 10th. Septvigny. Here comes the war again! The diplomats are dipping while the guns continue to roar along the front. We are recruited up to combat strength. The drill was suddenly halted this morning and we were soon getting everything in readiness for an early move tomorrow. We are scheduled for the front near Nancy to join an advance on Metz. It suits me. If the Hun must be beaten across the Rhine, it is a good idea to keep hit-

Photo by U. S. Signal Corps

The Weary Doughboy.
328th Infantry, Somerance, France, October 28th, 1918.

ting him now. He is being battered everywhere else along the Western Front and we might as well throw a jolt into him down there. I am experiencing some regret in leaving the charming Cecile so soon after discovering the generous nature of her mother. It has to be so I suppose I must lay this aside and mosey over and do my farewelling tonight. As the French will have it, "C'est la guerre!"

Can't help jotting down a postscript at two A. M. "France is certainly worth fighting for!"

November 11th. Neufchateau. They tell me it has come! That an armistice has been signed and the gaping guns along the front are silent! The glory of this moment! Can it be that I shall not hear again that awful roar of cannon, the whistle and shriek of shells through the air, and the deadly cackle of machine guns? Can it be the German is no longer my enemy, and I shall never again raid his trenches, nor lay through the night in the wastes of No Man's Land in waiting to murder him? And, oh, can it be that I shall go home again and see those I love, those who have lived, like heavenly spirits, somewhere about me during the long dreary nights up there?

God's mercy on those whose boys do not return! Comfort them! The pain, the awful, tearing pain, that will come to those who watch

the long procession of returning sons, see us radiantly happy and in glory, and have sons, husbands and sweethearts—who will never come back!

We hiked from Septvigny to Neufchateau. All along the road French and American flags were waved to us. Old folks and children came out to cheer us and bless us. France is grateful!

We passed through Domremy, the birthplace of Joan of Arc. I stood at the altar of France's martyr-saint.

Thank God for this night that the world rests again in peace!

November 12th. Goncourt. "Finie la Guerre!" the French have been shouting all day We have shouted back to them, "Feenish la Guerre!" I have read of the celebrations in Paris, New York, Washington and London when news of the armistice was flashed yesterday. How different with us! As we hiked along the road a staff car went by, and Colonel Johnston, our Division Chief of Staff, called out all along the line:

"It's all over, boys! Signed up at eleven o'clock!"

Everyone became silent! For perhaps a mile, not a word was spoken. Our emotions were deep emotions. To be suddenly snatched from the very jaws of death and restored to a world

of peace where we may live and love, strive and attain, overcame us. We were too happy to shout. We forgot for a moment the buddy by our side. Our thoughts flew across the Atlantic! We dared again to think of such strange things as life, love, and happiness! I know too, that many an old pal's thoughts went back to a shallow grave where his bunky lies, one of our country's glorious dead, killed on the field of battle!

Today, in peace, the mad glory of battle behind us, the people of many nations may look upon the ruins at their feet; the vacant chair in their own and their neighbor's home; the crippled bodies of young boys; the broken hearts, and the broken lives, of fond mothers! We have with us war stripped of all its vain glory!

We have won the victory, I wonder how our statesmen will use it?

Is the world safe for democracy?

Will there be another war?

Damned if I know! I am going to leave that for statesmen and Father Time to worry with. For my part I am going out and celebrate.

Paris? Yes!

Wine? Yes!

Women? Yes!

Song? Professor, pitch the key!

THE END

NO MCC

Date Due

DEC 11 1984

APR 08 1985

NOV 1 1989

DEC 09 1993

OCT 27 1991

OCT 06 1993

OCT 07 1993

DEC 10 1999

TRENT UNIVERSITY
0 1164 0093844 9

D570.9 .S47
Sirmon, W. A.
That's war : an authentic diary /

DATE | ISSUED TO

365749